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WESTERN AMERICANA

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Dedicated

TO MY MANY FRIENDS

IN THE CITY OF FALL RIVER.

story will be read with more than passing interest. There are too many among us here in the East who find life dull and aimless, and because of this a sort of mental and moral miasma has taken hold of their vitals, who if they would but read what Parson Riley has to tell them, they would be stirred by the life-giving breezes which blow from the Rocky Mountains, the Sierra Nevada, the wide plains of Texas, and the South Atlantic Ocean.

It will give information and amusement to all, and that too in language which is charming in its simplicity.

P. M. MACDONALD,
PASTOR ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,
BOSTON, MASS.

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Parson Ralph Riley.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS A PARSON IN THE WILD WEST

BEING THE EXPERIENCE OF

PARSON RALPH RILEY

BY

REV. JOHN BROWN

Ex-Member of the Massachusetts Legislature

FALL RIVER, MASS.
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1896.

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LIFE IS A MINGLED YARN.

THE LAWYER KNOWS PEOPLE AS THEY SEEM TO BE.

THE DOCTOR KNOWS THEM AS THEY ARE.

THE PARSON KNOWS THEM AS THEY WOULD LIKE TO BE.

THE FATHER IN HEAVEN KNOWS THE LAWYER, THE DOCTOR, THE PARSON, AND THE PEOPLE AT THEIR REAL VALUE.

INTRODUCTION.

MARK TWAIN and other humorists have described to us the great half-civilized frontier of the West, but no one has ever before attempted to do so from the same standpoint our author does. To our mind this book throws much new light on life in the wild West as few other books do, for it tells the whole story honestly and in a most natural way, without giving it any religious coloring. It is full of fun and humor, because the parson saw much to laugh at. Like other frontier parsons, he no doubt saw much also to weep over, but this does not come within the province of the present volume.

The author's record on the Western missionary field is well and honorably known to the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions. To young ministers contemplating work on our great Western borders, to the tens of thousands who are contributors to the extension of religion and civilization all over this land from sea to sea, to those who have near relatives roughing it on the frontier, as well as to those who have, or are likely to have, financial interests in our new States and Territories, this artless

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TWENTY-FIVE YEARS A PARSON.

CHAPTER I.

THE PREPARATION.

BOSTON is a busy city where every one is on the rush after the golden ox, knocking you right and left as you attempt to walk the streets. I therefore left the jostling crowd one day recently and retired to the Common, that is, the city park, and there for a while, beside a little lake, I sat looking at the chirping sparrows, playing children, and budding trees, when a man who was evidently a preacher joined me on the seat. His talk was so interesting in spots that I requested him to give me an outline of his life for publication, for I perceived that it might be instructive and interesting to the growing generations here in the East, seeing that the times and manners of life he referred to are fast passing away.

After considering the matter a little, he agreed to do so, and this is what he said:

Perhaps before complying with your request I had better tell you the fate of all papers which have published what I gave them. Out in Nevada, nearly thirty years ago, an editor there asked me to contribute weekly articles for Sunday reading, as I was a little behind with my subscription and had neither wood nor watermelons to bring him. That editor left town the following week. My first article appeared on Saturday, and on Monday he quietly folded his tent and stole away, Arab-like. Down in Texas, some twenty years ago, an editor requested me to give him some religious articles for the edification of his readers, and I had only given him two or three when his only cow jumped over a bluff and broke her neck, his wife went crazy, the poor man skipped between two suns, and the last seen of him he was heading for the North Pole.

In Washington city another of the brotherhood asked me to help fill up his columns with my best thoughts on the moral and political aspects of the country at large, and his poor Bird of Freedom expired in great agony after swallowing my first article, and the sheriff took the carcass when the spirit fled. In Fall River, here in Massachusetts, the Tribune got to publishing my sermons on Labor and Capital every Monday morning, and the electricity went out of it, and the people are without their Tribune till this day. If you publish therefore what I tell you, you will please caution the editor beforehand, for I do not wish any one any harm.

If I am to tell you anything in a connected form, I may as well begin at the beginning. Each mortal life is a distinct unit, and you cannot understand it unless you begin at the start.

The day of the week, the month of the year, or the year of our Lord in which I came to this mundane sphere, I do not recollect. I remember, however, that there was a great hubbub outside and inside the parental home on the occasion. Outside the dogs barked and the neighbors shouted to each other, "Did you hear the news?" Inside there were general congratulations. I observed certain old women present who must have followed the business of prophesying, for they told all sorts of things that would happen to me on the journey just started. Some of them, too, were so advanced in their profession as to tell what sort of a man I would be. One benevolent old granny said, "He'll be a good man!" Another said, "I'll wager you he'll be a soldier; look at his fists!" And another said, "He'll cross the seas and have many ups and downs in life; his friends will be much attached to him, and his enemies will be as malicious as old Nick." One old visitor took a peep at me, who seemed wiser than the rest, and shook her head, saying as she did so, "I'll bet you a penny he'll be a mixed sort of a beaver!" Thus they discoursed in their knowing way, and I wondered much at their talk.

A brother, who had just learned to wag his tongue, asked one of the old ladies present, "Where do babies come from?" "Hush, child," she replied, "but since you have asked it, I will tell you. They come down from heaven." That question being satisfactorily answered, another was propounded by the same inquisitive relation: "Why do babies have red faces?" The question seemed to stagger the old lady for a moment, but she was equal to the occasion and replied: "My little man must not ask such questions, but I will answer you just once more. Babies have red faces because they get awfully scorched when passing down by the blazing sun. Now run out and play, that 's a good boy."

After a few weeks my parents took me to church, and, holding me up before a man I had never seen before, water was poured upon my face. I was a meek and submissive child up to this point, but I thought it now high time to assert myself, and I kicked and screamed, so much so, indeed, that all present were glad when I was taken outside. I did not know then what it all meant, but I have learned since, and I am glad they did this thing to me, otherwise I would have grown up a heathen. The good man in the pulpit called me "Ralph." Had I been born in France they would have called me "De Ralph," or in Wales, "Ralphwzmlpp," but I am glad that I was born in a Christian country. As I grew up I was sent to school, and the teacher used to dust my coat quite often. I did not complain of this, for a healthy boy needs a healthy dusting once in a while, and I was healthy. But one day the teacher, who was a great big fellow, whipped a little girl that I had a sort of fondness for, and I struck him. More than my coat was dusted that day, and when my father examined my back at night he saw ridges like the Blue Ridge of Virginia all over my back. I never went to that school again.

Some years after I wanted to be a preacher, but it was a daring thing for a poor boy at four dollars a week to think of going to college. Dukes and lords might send their sons there, but who was I or my generation that I should seek such exaltation? The sons of the nobility in my native land were at that time usually divided into three classes; the brave ones went into the army, the lazy ones into the navy, and the fools into the church.

I, however, entered college, for I seemed, to myself at least, to have beautifully combined in me all of the three different elements that went, with a few others, to make up the greatest nation on earth. Well, the first thing they required of me there was to get a cap with a square board on top of it; that was to show my classmates that my head was level; also a red gown that was to show the rabble on the street that I belonged to the noble army of orators who made the Roman Forum ring with their eloquence in days of old.

Many years of weary work followed. Young men preparing themselves for the gospel ministry in this country know but little of the privations of a poor student where I came from, for here there is so much done for them by their parents and by the charitably rich. I had to pay my way through college, without a cent from any outside source whatever. To accomplish this I worked in a store till nine o'clook at night, and then studied till two in the morning.

But the struggle was more than I could endure through the theological course, and I came across the ocean to this country at the close of the war, believing that, after the terrible number of people killed, there would be room somewhere here for a fellow like me.

I went to work on a farm in New Jersey, and good, kind people there promised me aid if I continued my studies, which I did, and so in course of time I was made a reverend, and ever since they call me "Parson Ralph Riley."

I am very glad now of my hard preparation for the ministry, in view of my twenty-five years in the wild West. I am glad of it also because I am now fast reaching that period in life when I am not wanted. In my native land ministers, like wine, improve with age, but somehow the churches do not think so in this country. But while I am blessed with good health I can go back to the farm or the store again, and so I am independent as a king. The most helpless, most hopeless, and most useless of men living is the minister who, in his declining years, is not wanted by the churches, and who, in the days of his youth, has failed to acquire something more than mere book learning.

CHAPTER II.

THE START.

THE wise men who put a prefix to my name had an affix to their own as well as a prefix; but they did not give me that, they kept it for themselves. When I asked for it they said it meant a great deal after their name, but it would mean nothing after mine. Therefore, thankfully taking what I got, I went out from their presence and got for myself a good dinner, — the first in ten years, — for I felt that to begin preaching aright a good dinner was of more real value than all the ecclesiastical titles imaginable fore and aft to my name. Dr. Talmage was right when he said: "Give your preacher beefsteak through the week, and he will give you beefsteak on Sunday!" So was the old darky who thus prayed for his new minister: "O Lord, feed him with the heavenly manna, and we will feed him on chicken, hog, and hominy!"

Dinner over, I took my old Hebrew, Greek, and Latin lexicons and all their kin to a second-hand bookstore and sold them for money, having found them to be very full of contrarieties when we roosted together in garrets. Still, I could not help dropping a tear as I handed them over the counter, saying as I did so: —

> "Fare thee well! and if forever,
> Still forever fare thee well."

With the money I got for my old books I went to a tailor and arrayed myself for the first time in clerical garments. Oh, the intoxication of that supreme hour! When I looked at myself in the mirror I felt that I was indeed a "son of thunder," and would surely turn the world upside down if I got a good chance at it. Will that day never come back again? Will the bright visions of success now return no more? Is all the bliss of yon hour clean gone forever? Alas! what dreams we are made of.

But the whistle blows, and the sailors shout, "All on board!" and I am on a big steamer going to the Isthmus of Panama. The passengers on board were a mixed multitude from all parts, and were going to all parts of the world. When we got fairly out on the great sea a furious storm sprung up. A storm at sea is a sublime thing. I do not know of anything in nature's wide realm so grand. The waves roaring like thunder, and the winds howling the chorus, make music between them that is inspiring; that is, if you are ready to die. For a day or so things looked shaky for us, and we were all made to stay below. An infidel was present, and he did not like the idea of going into the other world by water, and he confessed to me, for we were both in the same stateroom, that if the good Lord only gave him another chance on dry land he would become a Christian and teach in Sunday-school. If the recording angel took note of all the good things conditionally promised in that storm, it must be interesting reading.

By giving the sailors a pull at the ropes, and perhaps a plug of tobacco on occasion, we got to be on very gracious terms with them, and they would tell us sea yarns by the hour.

One day while sailing along the coast of

Cuba, the sea was smooth and nothing specially doing, some of us thought it might be a good thing to put Jack's truthfulness to the test, and asked him to relate to us the most wonderful thing he ever witnessed at sea. A pause for a while followed and a feeling around in memory's storehouse for the right goods.

Then was told this, in all seriousness: "Many years ago I was on board the Dora of Boston, on a homeward voyage from the West Indies. One calm Sunday evening, when off the coast of New Jersey and we were about to retire for prayers, we saw a great black cloud approaching us from the shore. The skipper was in a perfect stew over it, for he could not make out what it was. It could not be a balloon, for it was too large for that; it could not be a thundercloud, for the barometer did not indicate any change of weather. Some of the superstitious thought there was something supernatural about it. But on and on came the black monster, and when we were all beside ourselves with terror, it struck us a few feet above deck and carried away every stitch of canvas from the masts. And what do you think it was? Why, a cloud of New Jersey mosquitoes!" A vote being taken, it was unanimously agreed not to believe the story unless it was corroborated by some one else. This was soon forthcoming from a brother tar, and here it is: "I remember that mosquito cloud very well. I was on board the ship Ocean Wave, and on that Sunday night was about twenty miles northeast from where the Dora was, and as sure as I am telling it, if that terrible cloud did not pass over us and every mosquito in it had on canvas pants." That settled it. But when we talked over the matter by ourselves we expressed our concern for the spiritual and moral condition of our sailor boys. One lady said that they were the biggest liars she had ever met. "It is just awful," said she, "to think of it, that our lives are intrusted to such a crew." Another lady wondered if there was n't a minister on board who would talk to them. It was now my turn to speak. Up to this point I told no one who I was, but I felt now that I must unbosom myself. To keep my light under a bushel in the midst of such darkness was cowardly. That was not all; I had never preached a sermon before, and now was my chance to practise a little to see how it would go. My audience could not criticise me very much, for they would be getting what I had to give for nothing, at any rate. If I blundered or broke down altogether, we would soon scatter and forget all about it. So I stepped out, and with a bow said: "Ladies, I am the man you wish for; I am the Reverend Ralph Riley, going to preach to the heathen Californians; but it strikes me that I might begin the good work right here." This made everybody glad, but one lady began to reproach me for not comforting them during the storm. "Ah, madam!" said I, "I needed all the comfort I could spare for myself."

This was on Saturday, and arrangements were made for my holding forth on the morrow. Just a little before the hour of service a lady was seen running up and down the cabin saloon wringing her hands and crying, "Oh, my jewels and my money! Somebody stole my valise. I am a ruined woman, and far from home among strangers! Oh, my jewels and my money!" Every one expressed the greatest sympathy for her, of course, and promised to help hunt up the thief. When about to begin worship, the distressed woman came up close to me and whispered, "Preach on stealing." "All right, madam," I replied, and began loading my gun for the bird wanted. I had for an audience before me sailors, stewards, steerage and cabin passengers. It was a mixed lot I had to preach to, and I took for my theme the place that liars and thieves go to when they leave this world. I described the terrible region in the most awful colors imaginable, and the more realistic I got the more pleased my lady friend seemed to be, and I could hear her say now and then, "That's it, give it to him! Bless the Lord!" I had the impression that one of the black stewards stole the lost jewels and money, and I pictured how Satan would roast the faithless, thieving servant who would steal from helpless passengers their property.

Perhaps my gun was not of polished steel, but it brought down the game I was after. The story-telling sailors whispered as they passed out that the mosquito yarn was not true, and the black thief went to the lady's stateroom that night and handed her the lost valise, saying as he did so, "Pardon me, madam, and for God's sake don't tell the captain!"

On crossing the isthmus our one-horse railroad broke down, and for four mortal hours we had to endure the horrors of thirst under a broiling sun. There was not a breath of air stirring, and there in the jungle we were stewed till we were all as dry as a cork. We all felt that if the valley we were in was not the valley of Tophet, we were not far from it. It was not a pleasant experience, I assure you, when not a drop of water could be got for love or money. At last, when we felt that water must be procured or we would all go crazy, a band of young men started in search of the precious liquid, regardless of savage-looking natives, wild beasts, or crocodiles. What will a man not risk when the throat is parched and the blood on fire! Water, blessed water, "it cooleth the lip, it cooleth the brain."

After an hour's search our daring youths returned with a bucketful of the much-desired liquid, and as they approached the train cheer after cheer rang out from one car after another, but, oh, the dismay caused at the sight of the stuff in the bucket! Both flavor and appearance were simply disgusting. Some of the ladies tried to weep, but there was not moisture enough in their bodies to form even one little tear. Could nothing be done to help the situation? Yes; I had something in my satchel — a bottle of French brandy — which I was advised to take for just such an emergency; but could I produce it in the presence of my fellow-passengers? Up to now I did not require to do any mixing in rotten water, but surely if the law and the gospel allowed such a thing, now was the time to do it. I was in a quandary for a little. Impulse said, "Give it to them; pour it in the bucket." Prudence said, "Don't you do it. They will say you are a tippling preacher.

"'Aye free off han' your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony,
But still keep something to yoursel'
Ye scarcely tell to ony.'"

The internal struggle prevailed in favor of mixing, and I rose up in my seat and said: "Fellow-travelers, we are in a dry and parched condition, and there is no telling when this thing is going to end. The unholy looking stuff in the bucket may be good enough for the heathen natives of this godless country, but for us, who are from the States and accustomed to drink from the springs that run among the hills, or from the old wooden buckets that sit by the wells of the fathers, it is not safe unless we put something in it."

"Amen, the parson is right!" shouted a brother at the end of the car. "That he is, indeed," chimed in an old chap just in front of me, whose eyes were sparkling with expectation."

"In my satchel," I continued, "ladies and gentlemen, there is a bottle of brandy. It is reported good for bad water and snake bites. I am disposed, however, to risk the water and the snakes of California and to mix it in this loathsome stuff, if you are willing to drink it afterwards." Three cheers for the parson followed, and the brandy was poured in the bucket and stirred with a stick. Then addressing my fellow-travelers again, I said: "You know that heathen male bodies drink and eat first, and if there is anything left over, the female bodies get it. But we will show a better example of good manners to the heathen hereabouts by giving the ladies to drink first. So take the bucket to the first car on the train and keep on to the last, and what the ladies do not drink we will."

Alas! there 's many a slip between the cup and the lip. When the ladies had all sipped there was not a drop left to moisten the masculine lip or to cheer the masculine heart. It was a woeful disappointment, and some of those men would come to me and say, "Parson Riley, have n't you got another?"

No; I had only one, and I am now glad that I gave it away as I did, for through all my wanderings since on this continent I have never yet come to a place where I could not get plenty of good water that needed no mixing, and as for the snakes they have never given me the least trouble.

CHAPTER III.

THE WORK.

ON arriving at San Francisco I entered into the work of the ministry with no small enthusiasm. I was given, however, a very hard field to work in; that is, I was given a church building perched on the side of a rocky hill about a mile beyond the suburbs of the city and about half a mile from the nearest dwelling. Talmage himself could n't draw a baker's dozen in such a place. I soon saw through the motives of the builders. It was not the spirit of the gospel, but the spirit of real-estate speculation that erected yon beautiful church. I have often since wondered if the city has yet reached out to my old church on the *portrero* where I used to practise oratory six days in the week, and ring the bell on Sundays just to scare the rabbits. The spirit of speculation was rampant on the coast in those days, and if it could have reached up high enough it would have scooped in the New Jerusalem

Religion was "mighty scattering" in the city by the Golden Gate when I was there, and I attributed this, to some extent at least, to the fleas of the place. Go where you would, in millionaire's palace or the hut of the lowly toiler, the lively flea was there by the bushel, and very persistent in his attentions to your anatomy. I have seen the housewife, while in conversation, reach for her broom and sweep the little pests by the million dancing to the street. It is very singular, but true, nevertheless, that where the fleas are plentiful religion is scarce. Go to Palestine, for instance.

I attributed also the lack of religion on the Pacific Coast to the fact that all the people there went to get gold, and when they got it they lost their religion, and when they did not it was all the same. But I suppose in this respect most newly settled countries are alike. There the restraints of religion and refined society are cast to the winds, and as a man feels within so he acts without.

The best place in all the world to study human nature is on the frontier. A minister of the gospel has special advantages, too, for this. It is said that the doctor knows people as they are, but the parson as they would like to be. On the frontiers of civilization, however, the parson, too, knows them as they are, for there as a man thinketh in his heart so is he. The doctor may know the anatomy of a man, but the parson generally finds out the nobility and meanness, the worth and the worthlessness, of those with whom he associates; therefore he sees much to laugh at and also much to weep at.

For a young preacher the frontier is the place for him. As a rule, when he starts out to preach he thinks himself very wise and able to do mighty things against Satan. He finds out after a time that the "race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." The hardened, wicked world is a stern reality, and strutting about like a peacock in the sunshine, and talking wisely to people who know as much as you do about mysteries, is disappointing. I was a fair sample of the young preacher myself when I started out in the clerical life, but the frontier soon took the conceit out of me. It will do it every time.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INDIANS.

LYING between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada range, which skirts the eastern boundary of California, is the great American Desert. In about the centre of that desert I went and fixed my headquarters along the newly opened railway, built a church and hung a bell in the tower of it.

That was the country of the Shoshone Indians, whom Joaquin Miller speaks of as "the true Bedouins of the American desert," the "roving and treacherous tribe of perfect savages, . . . having no real habitation, or any regard for the habitation of others." O Joaquin, poet of the Sierras, how can you say so? I know the Shoshones well. I have eaten in their camps, fished in the Humboldt with them, and danced at their moon and spring dances. We have sung and laughed together. When they first heard the music of my bell, the first to waken the echoes of the great and dreary desert, they came to me and inquired what it was and why it was, and when I told them it was to call the palefaces to the worship of the Great Spirit, they asked in wonder if the palefaces did so; and when I told them they did, they were glad. Happy children of the desert, I love to think of you! True and faithful ye were to me when I was sick. Ye had no medicine from the apothecary's, but ye brought me fish from the river and wild fowl from the hills. How I love to go back to you on memory's wing, and to hear you relate to me over again the brave deeds of your tribe in the days of long ago when the red man roamed at will, his horse drank clear water, and his dog fed on deer and buffalo. Oh, how you laughed when I told you of the deeds of my fathers away over the great waters where the mountains are black and wild, and where the ancient warriors went forth to battle, cheered by the stirring strains of the pibroch!

Ah! Joaquin Miller, your Shasta Indians may be altogether lovely in your eyes, but you did not know the Shoshones.

But Eastern people, too, imagine that these uncivilized Indians are a barbarous lot. I did not find them so. They had some good points, and a wonderful faith in the Great Spirit. Sitting around their blazing fires at night they would tell with the artlessness of a child how the Great Spirit made the world and the living creatures on it; only one speaking at a time. "Paleface no understand," they would say. "Paleface, he not know Great Spirit." Then with babelike simplicity they would relate how all came about. "Great Spirit make hole in the blue sky. Threw down earth and great stones. Heap earth and stone reach up to the clouds. Great Spirit no pleased. He put his foot on it and spread it out. Then he planted trees and flowers and grass. He no pleased how trees, flowers, grass grow. He say, 'I will rain water.' Then the rivers and the lakes came, and the deer and the birds and the buffalo. He no pleased and say, 'No man to hunt buffalo, no man to dance and sing.' Then Great Spirit make red man and red woman, papooses grow, walk over the great mountains, meet grizzly bear, meet panther, meet wild sea waves, papooses turn palefaces."

Spoil their simple story by mine? No, I could not. Well, there was in the village a large, brave, noble-looking Indian, who had long served the troops on the plains as a scout. Man-with-the-eagle-wing was a kind, good-hearted fellow, and as tender to his wife and only little daughter as any white man ever lived. Their little tent of skins was just big enough for themselves — three. It was no palace, but peace and mutual love were there. Little Prairie Flower would sometimes go down to the river bank to gather berries or wild blossoms from the overhanging trees; then her father, Man-with-the-eagle-wing, would watch her with his eagle eye from his tent door above. Wherever she went she was the apple of his eye and the joy of his heart. But her head burned hot one day in his arms, and her spirit went away suddenly as when the morning sun looks down on the dewdrop in the flower's cup. The heartrending grief of those red parents of the forest I shall never forget. Their tears, their wild wailings in their own language, their upward looks to heaven, were the very incarnation of sorrow. The mother pined away and died within a month. Man-with-the-eagle-wing was a sad, broken-hearted creature now. He would eat nothing, but weep; he would utter no word, but between sobs. Finally he left his tent and village and lived all by himself without food and almost naked, for he decorated the graves of his loved ones with his own clothing, about three miles away up along the river under the thick shadows of the woods there. After a whole week in this condition he made his way to my house, a few miles farther up the Humboldt, and when I looked on him I did not know him. Despair was stamped deep, deep upon his face. When I clothed, fed, and comforted him I sent him home to his own village, and in about a week called down to see him, and meeting Rain-in-the-face I asked him how was Man-with-the-eagle-wing. He simply pointed up and westward.

Man-with-the-eagle-wing had winged his way upward and westward to the region of the setting sun, where his darling wife and child had gone before him. He died of a broken heart. Who dare say that these simple children of the desert shall not be in the great multitude around the throne on high, redeemed from all nations and tribes of earth?

Those red-skinned people, too, were charming singers. I have heard some of the most famous singers, black and white, but I have never listened to such melodious music from the lips of any other mortals as I have from the lips of Indian maidens. Far down the Allawana I strayed one hot day to preach to a small settlement of whites. I was overcome by the heat and lay down under the shade of a cedar tree for a quiet nap.

Just as I was about to close my eyes an Indian girl, a sweet, round-faced creature about sixteen, clothed in skins and her black, long hair streaming down behind her back, began to sing pathetically on the other side of the softly flowing Allawana. She gathered berries, too, as she sung, and put them into a little basket made from the tall, slender reeds which grew on the banks of the river. As she sung and picked, she looked at me over the water, and her great black eyes were like Autumn weeping at the departure of Summer. She picked and she sung while she looked at me over the flowing river as if she loved me or pitied me. I did not know what she sung about, but the music of her voice was like the bursting of a sigh into a song. Perhaps it was the outward expression of an inward feeling of sorrow for the wrongs of the white man against her people; perhaps it was only a heart whisper that she sent to a lover in the dark shade behind her in measured accents. At any rate, it was a native song that she sung. I do not know how the angels look or sing in heaven, but it seemed to me as if this little red-skinned maiden of the desert was an angel, and I was overcome by a great and peculiar feeling in my heart such as I never before experienced, or since.

In Nevada, Texas, and elsewhere I have always found the Indians generous and thoroughly reliable, if you treated them right. Right treatment, however, is something, which, as a rule, they were strangers to, both at the hands of the invaders of their territory, the pioneers, and the government officials. The Father of all men will yet judge this nation for its treatment of the Indians.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOTELS.

ON going from California to Nevada I first realized the discomforts of a frontier hotel. The hotels of San Francisco, even thirty years ago, outrivaled those of New York. Going from one of them to a Nevada hotel was like leaving a Pullman palace car for a donkey cart. I shall long remember my experience in one among the Sierra Mountains. It was in the centre of a mining village, and was one of those hotels that might honestly have the sign "Boarders" over the door, for it was all boards together. The sides, the roof, the floor, and the partitions were made of boards. Some of the boards, too, were two or three inches apart. No doubt this was not to economize in lumber, but to let in to us — the boarders — the balmy air that came floating up from the valleys of California, fragrant with the perfume of roses as that of Arabia the blest.

The bedsteads were made of boards too, and the mattresses were very near it; that is, they were made of corn husks. I lay me down on one of these one night and tried hard to sleep, but could not There were corn cobs among the husks as large as those which grow in Kansas, and my rest was broken. Rising up I procured a pick and grubbed awhile, just as you see a farmer do when he is adding to his fields from the woodland. When I grubbed mv patch and evened it out, I laid down on it again to sleep. But just as I was about to tumble over into the arms of Morpheus, a man and a woman came in below, as I could see and hear through the openings between the board floor. Bidding the woman good night and wishing her many happy dreams in the Sierras, the man came upstairs and went to bed beside his wife in the next room to mine. There was nothing said for an hour or so, but the spouse was nursing her wrath to keep it warm for him. Then in a hard, determined voice she said: "Say, John, did you think I did not hear you downstairs? Who was that woman you came in with?"

"My dear," said John, "that was Miss Swan, the great Nova Scotia giantess, who is going to exhibit here to-morrow night. She 's just in with the train, and, O Jane, I wish you could see her! She is ten feet high, and O Jerusalem! such face and arms as she has got! Why, Jane, her face is like the full moon and as beautiful as the snow on Mount Shasta; and as for her arms, they are as thick and as big as the trees of Yosemite! O Jane, there 's glory in our town to-night!"

"Shut up, you fool!" said Jane. John was a mild man, and he shut up. He clerked in a store, and on occasions acted as a local Methodist preacher. Then there was another long silence, when the same dry, feminine voice again broke the stillness of the night, asking, "John, why did the landlady say to you yesterday, 'Don't squeeze my hand so,' and why did you say, 'Beg your pardon, dear; we are all human'? Tell me that, if you can. Did you think I did n't hear you?"

Somewhat hesitatingly John replied: "Jane, don't get angry. When she told me that she would score out the old bill against us, I was so overjoyed that I grasped her hand and shook it, and when she said, ‘Don't run up another, pay as you go,’ I said, ‘We are all human’ (that is, me and you), ‘and liable to fall behind again.’”

“Was that all?”

“Yes, that was all.”

Another long pause, and the same voice, questioning John, said, “Who was that you went home with on your arm Thursday night from prayer-meeting?”

“Go to sleep, you long-eared, lynx-eyed triangle and don't bother me,” said John.

Then burst upon the boards and boarders of that board hotel a high old time. It was fast and furious, and kept up till morning, when she took the early train to Frisco and John the first east-bound to Colorado.

“O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.”

On the frontier of Texas the hotels were, if anything, even worse than in Nevada, and were generally run by a class of people that neither feared God nor man. Many a weary night I slept in them when I wished myself on the highest peak of the Rockies.

Going to one of the Northwestern countries far out on the frontier when I went into that State from Washington city, I reached my destination wearied and dusty. It was late at night and I entered a hotel kept by an old man and woman that knew nothing of the corrupting ways of civilization. They were just lovely to behold, the one smoking an old cob pipe, and the other dipping snuff. On signing my name and where I came from in an old book, the landlady peered at me for a while and said, "Wall, stranger, I 've seed folks as comes here stuck to thar name, D.D., M.D., and LL.D., but what in the name of blue blazes does D.C. mean?" I explained to her that it stood for the District of Columbia, where Washington city was, up North. "I guess that 's whar Andrew Jackson used to be President," she replied. I said, "Yes." "And what did you do up North that you come down here?" was her next pointed question. "Did you steal something?" "No." "Did you burst a bank?" "No." "Did you kill somebody?" "No." "Perhaps you 're missioner then." "Now you have it, old lady." "Then pay your bill and go upsta'rs." I paid and went upstairs and to bed. I did not sleep, however, for a long time, wondering whether I had better preach or herd sheep in Texas. Next morning, on coming down, I asked her why she demanded my bill so snappishly, seeing that I had baggage enough to secure her interest in me. "Wall, stranger," said she, "you see that old man of mine out thar with a face on him as red as a beet?" I said, "Yes." "Wall, he 's an old possum, he is. He 's mighty religious when he 's a-fishing for a drunk, and he always gets drunk when a missioner comes about, for he gits the money out of him afore I git it. I don't like missioners about, for my old man gits religion from them, an' the money for their board, an' then he gits drunk. Three things that roils me mightily. I tried onced to send him over the river to Peter; I failed. I went to Fort Worth and bought a barrel of chain-lightning whiskey that would burn the heart out o' a hundred-year-old alligator, an' I says to him, 'Thar, drink that and go to h—,' and he sot down beside that barrel for weeks and weeks until he drank it dry, and upon my soul if he did n't fatten on it like a hog eatin' yeller corn. He did, the old coon! and I wish that I could get rid of him somehow. He axes me to go to Fort Worth ag'in, but I guess I won't. Say, missioner, don't you give him ony money, or religion either, for he 'll take 'em both to the saloon."

The frontier hotels have much to do in the making of reckless wild men. All the environments are bad. The beds, the food, and the guests, to say nothing of the proprietors, are of a class to make a man sigh for "home, sweet home."

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLUNDERING.

WHEN I began preaching in Nevada I used to preach very learnedly on the various duties and doctrines, and I would be told that it was veal I gave them for solid meat, and I think so now myself, for they did not seem to fatten on what I gave them, speaking figuratively. I doubt if it was even decent veal. I think it was but grass, and so green that were the cows to get hold of some of my sermons I fear they would eat them by mistake.

Blundering, too, was a failing of mine, and my people out yonder were not slow to tell me of it.

Shortly after I put on my clerical harness, I was asked to marry a young couple. Before going to tie the knot I practised on my landlady and her husband till I thought I had the thing down fine. Then going to the house where the wedding was to take place with swelling thoughts of my official importance, I returned from it wishing that I could creep into the smallest rat hole in creation. I made a terrible fool of myself. It was my first effort at the business of making two one, and I don't know to this day what I made of them at all. I forgot all that I should have said, and said everything that I should not. I made the young people, too, feel very bad, I am sure, for they seemed as if they were on hot irons while I was making them promise each other all sorts of things that were neither of heaven nor earth, law nor gospel. Then, to crown all, the bridegroom handed me a ring to be given in proper form, and, goose that I was, did n't I go and put it on the bride's finger myself, saying as I did so, "With this ring I thee wed; with all my worldly goods I thee endow," thinking of course that the bridegroom would follow me? but he did n't, because I put the ring on instead of himself. No wonder he looked daggers at me and did n't pay me anything for my trouble either.

Some laughed, and I don't blame them; and when I got outside the house there was an explosion of merriment at my expense, and I don't wonder at it. I sought comfort from my landlady, but she said, "Oh, you dunce! you married the girl to yourself instead of to the other fellow!"

Widow Black lived on a farm, and I made her mad as a roaring Niagara with my first funeral sermon. I was called to her house to preach the funeral sermon of her dead son. I never saw either before, for they did not belong to my church, and as she was heavily veiled in mourning I could not see her face. I imagined she was an old woman about seventy, and in my sympathy for her I prayed to the good Lord to be a husband to the aged widow according to his promise, and give her comfort to bear up under her sore affliction, and that in her declining years she might be comforted from on high. I went the day after to see her at her home, and she slammed the door in my face, calling me a fool of a preacher. On my way home, wondering what I had done, I met Deacon Willoughby, and he said: "Parson, you missed the right trail yesterday. Widow Black says you run her stock down fifty per cent. by praying for her the way you did, as a declining old woman. Parson, you must have more horse sense; that is the buxomest young widow on this 'ere coast, and all the bucks round are breaking their necks after her, for she has a mighty nice pile, she has."

Blundering again, yes, blundering again, and at a funeral too, and almost got shot for it. They did not give me time to prepare the right thing, and they did not tell me properly who the dead man was. He committed suicide the night before, and they came to me to preach his funeral sermon, telling me to give their pard a grand send-off to the upper hunting grounds, for he was a royal fellow and no tenderfoot in the sagebrush of Nevada. He was a gambler, and when he lost all, he passed in his checks and gave the game up for good. He threw dirt from the last ditch, and now they wished him put away with Christian honors so as to please the old folks back East. From another source they gave me a very black record of the man whom I thought was in the coffin before me, and when I began to speak I got hold of the wrong sinner and preached his funeral sermon. He — the sinner — was present, too, and that made it dangerous. My references were so personal that everybody knew that I was on " back of the wrong mule, on the wrong trail, and shooting at the wrong coon," as they said. If I had given my supposed suicide a good send-off, he would likely have taken it all right, but as I denounced gambling as a curse, and my supposed dead friend as the worst specimen of his class, his wrath boiled over and he sprung to his feet, pointing his revolver at me and shouting, " Don't shake me over hell that way, pard. Don't you do it, or I will blow your cabbage head into the next century ! "

He then left his seat and went out, declaring as he did so that he would put daylight through my upper story when I put his chum away.

When I got my breath, I made a few general remarks about the uncertainties of life and finished. Then at the grave I performed the remaining rites as softly as possible, and went home with a brother Mason for a week or so till his rage blew over.

What a blunder! I preached the wrong man's funeral sermon.

Shortly after I ventured out and was on my way to the postoffice when I spied the man whose bad reputation I proclaimed over the corpse of another, coming directly towards me. I confess that I thought of my own funeral and wondered who would preach the sermon. A cold sweat ran down my back, and my lips mechanically whistled a little tune ("The Campbells are coming") which I was wont to whistle when a boy to keep up my courage while passing along a lonely road at night where it was said uncanny things were seen and heard. When we met, he reached out his hand and said: "Parson, I apologize for my rudeness in your church, and I am glad now that I did not kill you; but take my advice, young man, and never preach a funeral sermon like yon again. You fellows of the cloth imagine that all of our profession are going to the devil when we die, but perhaps we will stand as good a show as yourselves. At any rate, be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove when you preach our funeral sermons in Nevada."

CHAPTER VII.

THE GAMBLER.

I HAVE never seen such another place for gamblers as Nevada was when I went there. They would have their gambling-tables even on the streets of its cities, and solicit the passers-by to take a hand.

In one of those cities along the Central Pacific Railroad, about halfway between the Rockies and the Sierras, I built a church, the first erected from Omaha to Sacramento after the opening of the overland road. I received a bell for it from the Presbyterian church, Montclair, N. J., and when it began to ring the first Sabbath after it was placed in the steeple, a crowd of gamblers were just about to begin playing at their table on the street. The peals of the bell were too much for them. They could not stand it and took to their tent; when the play was finished, according to an agreement made when they entered the tent, whoever won he was to go to church and put the stake in my collection box. So when in the middle of my sermon a dozen or so of the fraternity came in and sat down before me, I supposed that they were coming after me for another funeral sermon. But no, the winner had to give the stake money, which was quite large, and his chums came along to see that he did it. When the box went round a small sackful of gold and silver was emptied into it, and ever after there was no Sunday gambling on the street.

Sometimes you would find a deal of native kindness among those professional players, and they were generous to a fault when you came upon the sunny side of their nature. Sitting with one of them one day at the church door, he got to telling me his life, and one incident in it I remember was this, which shows that he could be at times touched by a noble sentiment. It was when he was living among the gold diggers of the Sierras. Prowling about among the cabins of the miners one day, while they were at work, he stumbled on a pile of gold dust in one of them — almost half a bushel of it — and he stole it. On reaching his gambling den he looked around for a safe place to hide it in. Standing on his table and reaching up to the loft to clear a place for it among his old traps, books, and papers, he grasped a book which he had not seen for many years, and had in fact forgotten all about it, but it went among his other books with him from place to place in his ramblings among the mountains of the Pacific Coast.

He opened it, and on the fly leaf was written, " From mother to her darling boy. May he be good and meet her in heaven!" It was a Bible and a birthday present from his mother, who lived back in New England, but the hand was now cold in death that wrote the inscription. The light of other days now returned to him, and for the first time in twenty years he bent the knee in prayer and wept like a child over his sinful life. The stolen dust was returned to its place with a letter accompanying, telling about the theft and requesting that it be hid away in a safe place, lest he should steal again and skip. He could not, however, give up his profession, though he tried hard.

There were some cunning rogues, too, among those Nevada gamblers. I remember how nicely one of them got ten dollars from me. It was on a Sunday morning and after I had finished service in church. Coming out I found him sitting on the steps and crying very bitterly, with his face between his hands. "You seem to be in great sorrow, my friend," I said to him. "Oh, yes," he sobbed out, "my beautiful wife, my dearly beloved wife, has just died, and I have not a dollar to buy a coffin for her. I am a total stranger here and don't know what to do." "Ah," said I, "be comforted, the rose on the bush is beautiful, but the crushed rose in the hand is more fragrant. May this affliction make you to know the joyful sound of the gospel! Take this ten-dollar bill and go about among our people, and tell them to add to it ten times or more."

He left profusely thanking me, and in ten minutes after he was gambling with it, and never was married at all.

It is exceedingly hard to lead a gambler away from his evil life, especially on the frontier where elevating and counteracting influences are few and far between. There the passion for gambling easily gains the complete mastery over the mind, and when once this happens the gambler's associates are of a sort to make his enslavement perpetual. A striking instance of this came under my observation while assisting at a Methodist camp meeting in Northwestern Texas. I was preaching on the willingness of God to forgive sinners, and a notorious gambler of the place was moved to come forward and kneel at the mourners' bench. A thrill of joy seemed to pass through the audience when this hardened sinner was apparently about to change his life. Indeed, some of the more demonstrative Christians present almost lost control of themselves, so great was their pleasure. The man was earnestly and honestly seeking religion where he believed it could be found, when one of his associates crept under the platform on which the preachers were seated and held a pack of cards right under his face, saying as he did so in my hearing, "Come, old boy, and have a game." The temptation was too great to be resisted. The mourner arose, wiped the tears from his eyes, and followed his tempter into a quiet nook of the woods where he and a band of the fraternity played for money while the camp meeting lasted.

Few, indeed, are they who return from the gambler's desert waste. They seem all to be carried down from deep to deep, till the sad story is ended in death. There is hope for the drunkard, but none for the confirmed gambler.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MINER.

THE old-time miner of the Pacific Coast was a rough, shaggy fellow, with hair on his teeth, as you found him wandering the mountains. He was from all parts of the world and had no home life anywhere. He never quarreled with his wife, for he had none to quarrel with. It would be years sometimes ere he saw the face of a female, and when he did, that face would not be over-angelic. Anything of female attire in the camp was treasured as a jewel to be exhibited on special occasions. A lady's hat, for instance, found its way into a certain camp where a lady's form had never been seen, and the homesick fellows used to place it on a table in the centre of their camp on Saturday nights and dance around it. The coming of respectable women in the course of time, however, was the regeneration of those camps. I remember well the influence for good that a lady from Chicago had on the rough miners of a certain place. She was refined in manner and good almost beyond any I have ever met with anywhere else. When that lady walked on the streets every hat was lifted as she passed by, and the man that would dare to speak of her but in the most respectful language was treated with scorn. She was a Christian woman of the noblest type, and did more to elevate the town by her quiet, ladylike manners than all the other Christians in the State.

When the roaming miner "struck it rich," he was the jolliest, most whole-souled mortal you could find on earth. He would treat you to the best he had in his cabin, and before a blazing fire at night tell you of the joys that would be his when he returned home to the East, or over across the seas. He was always going home, but never went. If he started, he generally got "busted" in San Francisco.

For several years I was bishop of all I surveyed in the Sierras and on the hot dusty plains of Nevada, and my rights as such there was none to dispute. Among the roaming miners I did all the marrying, the burying, and the preaching for hundreds of miles around, and I never lacked for plenty of money to move about with. I had to travel much in stagecoaches, on mule backs, etc.

Going into Eureka one day, when that town was in its boyhood pants, I was given the heartiest reception by its citizens, mostly miners, all fighting to have me as their guest. Arrangements were made at once with the proprietor of the dance saloon to have me preach there that night. When the hour of service arrived, you could see half a dozen of the "boys" running through the streets ringing dinner bells, and calling on their fellows to turn out to church. Inside the saloon all was put in order; a large cloth was drawn over the whiskey bottles, the girls were quietly and modestly sitting by themselves, and were practising hymn tunes so as to lead the singing. My pulpit was the counter, from behind which I preached to about six hundred men, all standing up during the service, and packed like herrings in a barrel.

Worship over, a tall, rough-looking fellow shouted, "Now, boys, let us give the parson a liberal collection! Whoop 'er up, boys; throw into this hat the white and yellow wheels, and bad luck to your silver holes in the mountains if you don't do it up brown!" Needless to say that the collection was a large one.

On passing out, with trembling voice and moistened eye an old man grasped my hand and said: "Young man, when I was like you I was a Christian too, but I quarreled with my wife in the East and left her. That was in '49, and I don't know now anything about her, or any one else of my relations. I would give my bottom dollar to see once more those I used to love, but perhaps I will meet them in heaven.' I am now old and must go somewhere else than here soon, but I tell you, friend, this religion that I experienced when I was young will up at times, that it will. I have been a hard-living man among these mountains, but my mother's religion is now my only comfort. Ah! yes it will up;" and so saying he went out into the darkness wiping his eyes.

Coming in from Hamilton city on my mule, through that dreary desert which lies between the White Pine range and the Central Pacific Railroad, I caught up on an old man who was tramping it back to California. He had on his shoulder a pick and a spade, at the end of which was a little bundle of food and clothing. He was dusty, sad, and weary. His long, white hair, his deeply furrowed face, and slowly measured step there all alone in the sagebrush made him the very picture of despair. And yet on closer inspection you could see that he was once a strikingly handsome man. I felt sorry for him and asked him to exchange places with me, but he would not. I urged him, but he positively refused, saying, "Not a step will I ride in stagecoach or on back of mule. I will teach this old kangaroo to go again to White Pine." White Pine had at the time a great silver boom and of course thousands flocked there, as they always do to such places, only to be disappointed. Here was one of the disappointed ones punishing himself by walking back hundreds of miles to where he came from. Thinks I, here is a man worth knowing, and jumping off my mule, I walked beside him for a while to learn the history of his life. About noon we came to a little water hole, and I proposed that we should rest awhile and make coffee. He consented, and while we were partaking of the cheerful cup together and speaking of the hardships of frontier life, he gradually went over his own checkered career. Said he: "I am an Englishman and belonged at home to an aristocratic family in Kent. In boyhood I went to Eton and Cambridge and prepared myself for high social standing. I married a rich and beautiful lady, but she was, like myself, fond of fast horses and gambling, and so we burned the candle at both ends, and it soon went out in smoke. To retrieve our ruined fortune, we went to Australia, and my wife got employment as governess in a rich family and I went to the gold diggings. I had good luck, and after a few years I was worth thirty thousand pounds. I then returned to Melbourne and set up an establishment, living with my wife again in great style. Indeed, neither of us could bear the idea of any one else being ahead of us in extravagant display. The old passion for gambling came back to us, and we lived a fast life. Again our riches took wings and fled, and my wife fled with them to the arms of another who could keep the show a-going. I went back again to the diggings, but made nothing, and then to cattle running and sheep herding. This was a dog's life, and I left it and returned to the city.

"I did such odd jobs as I could get to do for a living. One day I was sweeping the pavement for a storekeeper in front of his store, when who should happen to come along but my faithless wife, dressed in great style, on the arm of her lover. She stopped and began to cry when she saw my condition, and angry words passed between husband number one and number two. The cad made an insulting remark and I shot him dead before I knew what I was about. My wife screamed, and I had to flee for my life. I took to the bush and there lived awhile more like a savage than anything else. When I thought it safe to do so, I ventured to the coast and left Australia as a sailor, going to

Java. From there I worked my way to San Francisco. That was many years ago, and though I feel quite safe now from arrest, yet my life in California has been a hard one. I came near getting hung in the city by the Golden Gate during the vigilants. They gave me one hour in which to leave the city forever when some of my chums were strung up, and I took to the mountains without delay, and I have been roughing it ever since. I don't know what became of my wife, and my friends in England don't know anything of my whereabouts, and I suppose they don't care, now that I have the brand of Cain upon me.

"My life is a lost one, whereas it might have been both happy and honorable. Extravagance did it, and now

'My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flowers and fruits of love are gone,
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone.'

"I have tried in many ways to forget the past, but I cannot, and with Byron I can truly say: —

'I fly like a bird of the air,
In search of a home and a rest,
A balm for the sickness of care,
A bliss for a bosom unblessed.
I wander, it matters not where,
No clime can restore me my peace
Or snatch from the frown of despair
A cheering, a fleeting release.
But homeless and heartless I roam,
My bosom all bared to the wind,
The victim of pride and of love;
I seek, — but, ah! where can I find?'"

His, indeed, was a sad story of conjugal failure, financial ruin, remorse of conscience, and misery without a single ray of hope. I tried to inspire him with new courage, but it was no good. He lost faith in himself, in manhood and womanhood, and he hoped when he died that they might bury him beside a dog, for he believed there was more faithfulness to the dog than to man.

The miner's life was full of romance and adventure during those early days in California and Nevada. The old "forty-niners" now living delight to relate, when they are in the right mood for it, their first experiences on the coast. I have spent at their fireside some of the most enjoyable hours of my life listening to their stories so full of almost incredible things.

Visiting in Virginia City an old friend whose acquaintance I had made in Elko, he told me at my request a bit of his history after we had partaken of supper.

"When the rush for California was on, in '49," said he, "I and my wife and children left our farm in Ohio, accompanied by the wife's brother. We started overland to California. We had two covered wagons drawn by four yoke of oxen, in which we lived on the journey. We had a very hard time of it between Indians, swollen rivers, and bad roads.

"After getting through the American Desert, where we had some trouble with the Indians, we arrived at a point where the road forked, one branch going considerably north of the other into California. There we remained for a week, wrangling as to which we should take. My wife sided with her brother in favor of the northern route. Neither of us would yield a peg, and finally we divided the children, the oxen, and all that we had;

she and her brother going their way, and I going mine. We did not expect to meet again, at least I did not, nor wished to either, for I was sick of her and all her relatives. She always sided with them and against me, and I put up with her as long as I did because of the children. I ceased to love her and despised all her kin. Well, we parted, and women being scarce on the coast in those days, she got married to a fellow who had luck. He took her to San Francisco and they lived in big style. I had many 'ups' and 'downs,' and being one day without a dollar in the same city, I went about looking for work. A rich swell hired me to chop a cord of wood in his back yard. At noon I sat down on the wood to eat a few crusts I had in my pocket when, on looking up, whom did I see but my old wife dressed to kill, just as if she had come from Paris, and looking down on me from her window. 'Halloa! is that you up there so grand?' I said. 'Yes,' said she, 'and you better come in and get a decent dinner.' I went, for I was pretty lank at the time, and a good dinner was not to be despised. While I was eating she asked after the children I had and told me about her new married life. I did not stay long inside, for my employer, who was down town, might come in, and finding me there instead of in his back yard, raise a row. When I got through, she paid me a few dollars more than I agreed to do the job for and I left. Before going, however, I made a few remarks on the folly of our quarreling, when, tossing her head, she said, 'It was a good thing for me, at any rate. You are now suffering for not doing as brother wanted you to.' I kept plodding on, and by and by I struck it rich in the Sacramento valley and was on the board of aldermen of Sacramento City, when one day a poor, haggard, miserable-looking woman applied to us for relief. I knew her well, but did not let on that I did. She knew me also, but acted as if she did not want to be recognized. She got the relief she wanted, and procuring her address, I called and took the children from her. I learned afterwards that she died in the poorhouse.

"I am now married, as you see, to another wife, who is not so headstrong as the other was. Had my first been like this one the forks of the road would not have parted us. But bygones are bygones."

I observed on almost all occasions, even when the story-teller was in the best of spirits, that there was an undertone of sadness in the voice. Strange and romantic things happened in the days of long ago; yes, and sad, sorrowful things too, the bare remembrance of which brought moisture to the eye and a lump to the throat.

Rough and rude as frontiersmen may be to each other, they never fail to be polite and chivalrous to women, and courteous to ministers of the gospel. In all my experience in the wild West I never saw but politeness to good women, and I never had a single insult offered myself by any one, except by a postmaster in Elko, Nevada, and he was a miserable foreign infidel who had once been a miner. It was the custom of this man, invariably, when I entered, especially if the postoffice was full of men waiting for their mail, to sneer at religion, the Bible, and preachers. I endured his taunts for a long time, until endurance ceased to be a virtue, and then I felt it my duty to buckle on the armor, speaking figuratively, and give the unbelieving scamp a thrashing. One day when I was standing in the crowd waiting for my mail, he remarked in the hearing of all, for my benefit, "What simple fools these preachers are, coming out here to tell us that Jesus was the Son of God, or even that there is a God at all!" I replied with warmth: "You vile-mouthed infidel! it is your place to attend to the business of your office, and properly represent the President who appointed you; but seeing that you keep insulting me and the Master whom I represent, and that reason and argument are only like casting pearls before swine in your case, I ask you to come out here from behind that counter, and if I don't put religion into you, I will at least give you the whipping you deserve."

This came as a surprise to him. He looked at me dumfounded and speechless, wondering, perhaps, if I could do it, or if President Grant would remove him if he had a fight in the office and was reported. At any rate, he stood as if he were struck dumb, while the laughing crowd cheered the parson and demanded that he should come out from his desk and receive his whipping like a man, there and then, English fashion. But he declined, remarking that the rules of his office did not allow him to fight while on duty. "Then," shouted the excited crowd, "you are a miserable coward, for you used your office to insult a man who was attending to his own business!" Never, during the years I was there, did that man open his mouth to me against religion again, and we became quite friendly afterwards.

CHAPTER IX.

THE STAGE ROBBER.

STAGE robbing in those early days of Nevada was a common occurrence, and more than once I came home minus my collections and everything else of value. It seemed to be a paying industry, for a large number of able-bodied men were engaged in it. I only succeeded once in cheating those bold rascals. Coming from one of the most flourishing mining towns of the State with a silver brick in my pocket, presented me by the governor, a band of daring wretches, standing on the road in front of us, saluted our driver with a shot of blank cartridge. We all knew what that meant, and those of us who had valuables on our persons were put to our wits how to save them. I grieved to lose my beautiful brick, when a bright thought possessed me; it was to cut a hole in the cushion of my seat and there hide it. When the coach stopped we were required to turn out, take off our boots, and stand in a row while the robbers searched our pockets. This was the usual method of relieving us of whatever was worth taking. Then a hurried glance at the inside of the coach and all was over. On the occasion referred to, my much-prized brick was not discovered. I shook hands with the gentlemen of the road on parting, and invited them to come to my church when they came to Elko.

Sometimes I have known inexperienced young men from the East to try their hand at the business, but they generally made a mess of it. They got either caught or killed. I felt exceedingly sorry for one of those misguided youths whom I met in one of our hospitals. With two of his chums he started ahead of the coach going to Idaho from Elko, one night in winter; and a snowstorm coming on, which covered the stage road, they got lost. One was frozen to death, one had to have both feet taken off, an operation in which I took part, and the other got well as by the skin of his teeth. The one that got his feet taken off used to come to my study, which was near the hospital, on his hands and knees and have me write letters to his parents in New York State. I have one of those letters still, and here it is: —

> *My dear Parents,* — Your bad, disobedient boy has met with a cold reception in this wicked country, so cold indeed that he has lost both his feet.
>
> Others did so well at stage robbing that Bill Wilson, Dick Dyer, and I thought we would try our hand at it, but we made a miserable failure. A terrible snowstorm came on us in the mountains and poor Wilson was frozen to death. Dick got through it all right, but my feet were so badly frozen that they had to be cut off. It is awful to think of it, that I must go the rest of my days on crutches. The other fellows that came with us West robbed a coach one night and got so much gold and silver that they were overloaded and so got caught by the sheriff; they are now serving a term of ten years in prison.
>
> Dick has skipped to California, and the sheriff is threatening to send me there also if I don't get money to take me home. For God's sake, try and send me some immediately and I will promise never to leave home again.
>
> Your affectionate son,
>
> JOSEPH SAUNDERS.

Stage robbing was usually the outcome of gambling, and both the gambler and the robber ended their wicked course in the same place — either the penitentiary or the grave.

CHAPTER X.

THE QUEER PREACHER.

QUEER customers of every sort used to visit us in those Nevada towns after the opening of the railroad. Temperance lecturers would come, hold meetings abusing the use of liquor, and then finish up by going on a big drunk. Preachers, too, with a shady record would visit us, and for a time you would imagine that they were the salt of the earth, but after a bit the salt would lose its savor. Theatricals would come demanding the use of the churches for their plays, and when they didn't get them they would call all belonging to them hypocrites. I foolishly once consented to let one such party play in my church, as the acting was in the interest of temperance, and when they got through they stole my pulpit Bible, which cost ten dollars.

A queer-looking preacher once came to Elko to convert to his faith — which was of a sort as queer as himself — all the people of the place. Because I would not step aside and give him my pulpit he went about town telling that I was an escaped convict from over the water.

The sheriff of the county being a friend of mine, I requested him to write to a similar official in my native land in order to find out the falsity of the charge. "No," said he, "I will have him come and preach to my prisoners in jail to-morrow, and if he escapes with his life he may be thankful." So the sheriff informed him that the prisoners desired to have him preach to them the gospel, for they were penitent. He went and was locked in with a dozen as hardened sinners as preacher ever spoke to. After he began his worship a bucketful of dirty slops was poured over him. Then began a scene that I suppose he has never forgotten. They took him by the neck and feet and pitched him from side to side of their cell; they beat him and pounded him till his body was covered with bruises. The yells of him for mercy, and shouting to the sheriff, could be heard a block or two away. When he was more dead than alive they let him out, and he rushed to my study for refuge and cleansing. This I objected to, but volunteered to take him down to the river and souse him in, which I did. He left town with the first train.

One day as I stood by my tent door I saw a great crowd on the main street listening to somebody preaching, for they had nothing else to do, it being the Sabbath. Curious to hear some one else preach, I joined the crowd. The preacher was a little withered, wizened creature about forty, and weighed, perhaps, one hundred and thirty pounds. He had a slanting forehead, long hair hanging down behind, and a thin voice with a sanctimonious drawl to it. His appearance was decidedly against him, and what he said was even more so. He was a Mormon preacher once, he said, over in Utah, but he would rather live by the sweat of his brow among the mountains of Nevada than by the sweat of his jaw proclaiming the false doctrines of Mormondom. Well, his sermon was a queer mixture of things sacred and divine, and there is no telling how it would have ended had not his wife put a stop to it, for it was getting worse and worse as he went on. Here is a sample: "My dearly beloved pilgrims in this howling desert of a wicked world, ah, yes, I am come to help you to Zion, beautiful Zion. Yes, ah, yes, verily, for I am guided by a great light; yes, verily, greater than it would be were you to sweep the sun, moon, and stars into a great heap big as yon mountain. I saw this light in Utah, and I heard a voice from heaven, too, saying unto me, 'Ebenezer, Ebenezer, go over the mountains and speak to the children of men in Nevada. They have no light there but the light of the saloon and the dance hall. Their God is their gold, and their Saviour is their silver, and there is no health in them.' Ah, yes, and the mothers in Israel wept sore when I preached my farewell sermon, and the maidens cried, 'Shall we never behold his face again?' And they gave me on parting, corn and wine, oil and honey. Ah, yes, verily, and I came over the mountains. and ever since the valleys and the rivers and lakes have been saying unto me, 'Arise up, Ebenezer, and speak — speak of the new light of Zion.' Yes, verily, verily; and the little minnows in the brooks, the fish in the rivers, and the trees of the valleys; ah, yes, and the goats on a thousand hills, too, have cried out to me, 'Arise, Ebenezer, arise and proclaim the new light of Zion.' Ah, yes, verily; and as I came up here from my little farm yonder, all things, living and dead, clapped their hands and shouted, 'Blessed is Ebenezer that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"

Just then an ox team, hauling a load of cedar poles, came slowly along to the outer edge of Ebenezer's congregation, driven by a large woman of middle age, and perhaps weighing about two hundred and fifty pounds. "Wo-o-oo, thar," from the masculine voice of the woman brought the oxen to a stand. The preacher's back was towards her and her presence was unknown to him. I was near enough to both to hear what each said, and it was after this manner in a singsong by Ebenezer, and in a harsh undertone by the woman. He: "I am come now that you may have my light too, to lead you to Zion. Your corn and your wine, your milk and your honey, your gold and your silver, I do not ask, for, like the preachers which be of the world, for myself, ah, no, verily." She: "Oh, you barking Cayote you!" He: "You may give me these, however, for the use of my family if you wish to, but I need them not for myself, as it is my food and drink to do my Father's will." She: "You big-mouthed jackass you!" He: "Ah, yes, verily, and the laborer is worthy of his hire while he toils in the vineyard of his Lord." She: "You lazy, white-livered loafer! I never knew you to do an honest day's work since I got you." He: "Woe is me if I dwell in Nevada and not preach in the town of Elko! Ah, yes, verily." She: "Woe is you if you don't sell this wood and get supper for the children to-night, you good-for-nothing wolf in sheep's clothing you." He: "And woe, woe to the tents of Elko if my new light of Zion does not shine in them." She: "You bottomless pit of darkness you, your light is not even that of a penny candle, and you want to flicker with it in the tents of Elko, do you?" "He: "Ah, yes, verily, the days of our years are threescore and ten, and then the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." She: "You brainless yellow dog! you have had more rest from me and the fleas than you deserved." He: "But, my dearly beloved, my light shows me a great city; ah, yes, verily, it is a glorious city, and I will walk on the golden streets of that city some day with a sweet-faced angel by my side, and" — She, at the top of her voice: "You will, will you? you roving prodigal son of Sodom and Gomorrah!" and with that she made a bound from the wagon and caught him by the collar of his coat, pulling him to the ground, and rained upon his prostrated body blows from the thick end of her whip. The roaring, laughing crowd applauded, shouting, "Give it to him," "That 's it," "Good for the old woman," "Hit 'im again," "W'ack it to 'im," "Chuck him in the river," etc. When she exhausted the strength of her arm on him, she gave him a kick with her foot, saying as she did so, "Go sell that wood that me an' the children get something to eat for supper; we be starving at home, an' you know it."

"A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill-seeming, bereft of beauty."

Rising up and shaking himself, Ebenezer pathetically said, "Well, boys, you may laugh at this, but I am accustomed to it."

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHURCH MEMBER.

AS members of our churches, too, we used to have some queer timbers. Generally I got along with the men very well, especially if I did n't rebuke too severely their besetting sins, but the class of women which followed the new railroad were hard to manage in church or anywhere else. There was Mrs. Rogers, whose tongue went like a bell clapper from morning till night. She was a terrible scandal to our church at Lebanon. Perhaps I had better let one of my elders describe her as he did shortly after in the local paper of his Eastern home: —

"Out here in Nevada they have made me an elder in a Presbyterian church at Lebanon. We have a young preacher just from Union Seminary, New York. We have strange people here composing our churches. They come from all parts of the world in search of wealth, and some of them claim to be religious, though such are few and far between. But if we are to have churches at all, we must take such timbers as the country affords. We have one or two in our church that I wish sometimes we could hand over, like Brigham Young, to the buffetings of Satan.

"There is Mrs. Rogers and her husband; they are the stormy petrels of our town and church. If you cross them in any way or rebuke them for their slanderous speaking, there is at once an opening of the temple doors of Jupiter, and before you know it there is a scattering of forked lightning and a thunder burst.

"He is a red-headed mule driver, and she is a black-haired boarding-house keeper with a dash of Mexican blood in her. The blackguardism that goes on continually between them, and never ceases in church or elsewhere, is the scandal of the country. The preacher prays earnestly in his study to the Lord to change the 'lion into a lamb and the hyena into a turtle dove,' if it is possible for him to do so, for the good of the place; but this is as far as he will venture near them. One day recently I called on him and said, 'This thing must stop. Our church is being ruined; the people are leaving us and joining the Methodists. We will have no church at all soon if we don't put Mr. and Mrs. Rogers out.' The preacher thought we had better go slow and first gently caution them against their unruly temper to see how it would work. So we resolved to visit them, and having braced up our courage for the risky ordeal, we went forth and entered their house and sat down in the parlor. Presently Mrs. Rogers came in and took a chair opposite us. After a few commonplace remarks about the weather and the prospects of the growing crops and the mining industry, the parson, meek as Moses, began to expatiate on the evils resulting from ungovernable passions and the unruly member that sometimes needed bit and bridle.

"While he talked with fear and trembling, Mrs. Rogers, gazing at him, moved sideways, then backwards and forward, like a huge giant in the bowels of a mountain and trying to throw it into the sea, and a wild frown began to gather on her brow, like the thunder clouds that sometimes loom up over the Rockies and deluge the rugged peaks with rain. Her large, dark eyes began to flash fire like lightning in the tropics during the wet season; and then, fast as a meteor athwart the heavens, she ran through the long passage of her boarding-house, screaming, shrieking, 'Rogers! Rogers, come here! He is insulting your wife!' Rogers was cutting firewood in the back yard, and he came in, rushing like a buffalo and bellowing like a bull of Bashon. 'Who? Who? Where is he?' with the axe high uplifted in air. I hid in the dining-room, but while Mrs. Rogers was pounding me with a rolling-pin, the preacher bolted through the frout door and down the street so fast that you could have played cards on his coat-tails, and Rogers after him. The idle dogs joined in the chase. It was a sight for gods and men. The women rushed out to their doors, the dancers and gamblers in the saloons rushed to the streets, everybody asking, 'What is it? What is the matter?' The two men ran like race horses on the track. Now Rogers seemed to be catching up, and now the parson seemed to be the swiftest runner. It was almost neck and neck between them, however. The man of peace had serious business on his hands and for his legs, and he knew it, therefore strained every nerve and muscle. Yes, for if the man of war had caught up, he would have split him in two. Fortunately for the young minister, he was a Freemason, and he took refuge in a carpenter's shop where all were brothers, and, giving the grand hailing sign of distress, was quickly surrounded by men who kept Roger at bay. Then the furious bull went home and asked his wife what it was all about."

More shipwrecked lives, more beggars who were but yesterday millionaires, and more millionaires who were but yesterday beggars, it would be hard to find in any other country under the sun, than was to be found on the Pacific slope during the last generation. How often my heart bled for the poor, unfortunate outcasts of society, especially when called in to administer consolation in the dying hour, or to read the burial service over them in death! The tale of woe which some of them would relate was often sad in the extreme. In one of the mining towns of the Sierras, I was sent for to one of the hotels of the place, to comfort a wretched creature who was fast nearing the end of her course in despair. She was once a church member.

On entering her room, I found her crying piteously and in great agony. I tried to calm her mind by showing her that the path of life for all of us was rugged and full of sorrows, but that there was a happier life awaiting the soul who was washed in the fountain for sin and uncleanness. It was but little I could comfort, for she seemed, as she said, "to be perishing without hope." The tale of her life was a sad one. She was the only child of fashionable parents who were continually at war with each other. When she was about fifteen her father left home, taking her with him, and after living a few months in another State, procured a divorce from her mother. He then married again, and her stepmother was bad to her and she ran away with a sporting fellow who promised to marry her in Chicago, but he did n't. Then he took her out to San Francisco, and after a year of ill treatment, left her; and as she had neither parents nor character, she abandoned forever the path of purity, and sunk lower and lower in vice till she had now come to the end of her course, hating the living and fearing to die. Coming back the next day, I brought with me this prayer, which I had written out for the purpose of reading to her, for she told me that she preferred read prayers. "O Lord of heaven and earth, hear the wailing cry of this poor lost sheep that has wandered away from the shepherd's fold to these mountains of vanity here, which are now become to her bleak and cold! She is here alone among rough, cruel men, far from mother's and father's love, and she fears, beyond the reach of divine mercy. Have compassion upon this child of thine own creation, O Father in heaven, and guide her safely through the dark valley of death. Hear, oh, hear the cry of her soul for cleansing from the pollutions of Sodom and Gomorrah, for she was once pure as the snow, in a mother's arms. To that mother's arms she now cannot go to nestle again her head in the bosom of human love, and she weeps the weeping that knows no consolation till encircled with the arms of divine love. Have pity, Lord of life and death, and save from the raging waves of a degraded life while the waters of death are coming up over the soul. The jewel in the mire is jewel still, and, O Jesus, Son of Mary, take this precious stone and polish it for a place in the Temple not made with hands in thy kingdom." When I approached her bed, I saw that she was fast dying; and as she was too weak to speak I knelt and read my prayer. What good it did her I cannot tell, for when I rose up from her bedside the weeping spirit had fled and the hands were folded in death. A few rough neighbors gathered in, and we took her up tenderly and dug a hole in the side of the mountain, and there, as gently as ever mother laid her child to sleep in its cradle bed, we laid her away till the coming of the Angel of the Resurrection.

In a room adjoining the one in which this woman died was a lady from St. Louis, who was a church member from her youth in one of the most fashionable churches of that city. Up to this time she did not deign to attend any of our Sunday services. The preacher, the audience, and the surroundings were all too far beneath her notice to do that. The partition wall between the two rooms, like those of most frontier hotels, was rather thin, and the reading of the prayer could be easily heard by our uppish, self-righteous friend from St. Louis. She did hear it, and it went home to the right place, too. It was not meant for her, but it was under God the means of her conversion, and the making of her one of the noblest of Christian workers.

The unruly church member, the fallen church member, or the mere churchly church member, is bad enough in civilized communities, but when you find such in the wild West they are worse than useless. There it is either belief or infidelity, Christianity or heathenism. It is for the East to say what the West will be.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH ROW.

I WITNESSED a church row on a grand scale once in Nevada. You talk of church rows here in the East, why, they are no more like what we used to have out there than a hurdy-gurdy and monkey show is like a Barnum circus. Out yonder they were grand with the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains and Sierras. We had none of your little quarrels you have hereabouts with small Christians in them saying mean things against each other in the dark. No, when a sister in Nevada buckled on the armor to do battle against the Midianites she was a Deborah, when a brother drew his sword he was a Gideon, or a Samson mowing down the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. I attended such a row one Sunday afternoon at a church service under a spreading oak by the Truckee River, on the eastern slope of the Sierras. The congregation was made up of silver miners, gamblers, lumbermen, and gold hunters from California. Some of them were Welshmen with their wives, with a dozen or so Indians standing on the outer edge of the congregation.

When the preacher got through his sermon he asked them to name the next place of meeting. "Pine Nob" Morgan suggested that we meet at Sister Ferguson's place in Roaring Cañon. Mrs. Morgan jumped up and said: "Not if I know it, by gosh!" Pine Nob told her to shut her mouth or he would put a spur of the Sierras in it. California Jack from Cedar Gulch told Pine Nob that he was no gentleman, and did n't know how to behave himself in church. Mrs. Brown screamed that Pine Nob was seen going too often up to Roaring Cañon. Andy Jackson asked her what sort of a boarding-house she kept when Brown was in the mountains? One of the boarders got up and said he would make mince-meat of Andy and feed him to the dogs. Jemima Ferguson asked where was last Sunday's collection? "It was drunk at the Red Gulch saloon!" shouted a half-dozen angry voices. The preacher raised his arm to pronounce the benediction, but they must have supposed that he was waving them on to deeds of valor, for every man and woman of them sprung to their feet and at each other like fury. Then you would see their eyes glare like Carnegie's furnaces, their fists rising into the upper air like a peak of the Rockies, and the sound of their screaming and shouting was like the roaring of the Atlantic when a "sou'wester" is blowing. Red Dog, one of the Indians present, gave a war whoop and leaped up from the ground four feet, and then ran around yelping, as he used to when after scalps.

I tell you they don't know how to get up church rows back here in the East, and when they try it they don't succeed any better than Balaam's ass did, or Jonah when he went into the gourd plantation business. Usually, too, they do it with a pious twang, and a stranger might suppose that they were Hezekiahs or men of that stamp.

I like first-class church rows with first-class Christians in them. Then the air smells like the atmosphere of Nevada and the music enters your soul like "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled."

CHAPTER XIII.

"INDIAN JOE."

"INDIAN JOE" was an old-timer in Nevada. He used to hunt bad Indians for the government, and he boasted when I knew him that he could put as clean a bullet through a bad Indian, or anything else bad, as any man that ever came to Nevada. When you saw him walking in the sage-brush, you imagined that you saw an Indian, for his movements were so similar. "Indian Joe" made bricks and laid them in the wall when he got the chance. There was nothing small about Joe, and when I was about to build a church he came to me and said: "Parson Riley, I will build you the foundation if you allow me to preach a sermon and take the collection when the church is finished, for I used to give the boys a word in season myself before you parsons began to come to Nevada." When the Sunday arrived that Joe was to preach, he entered the pulpit arrayed in moccasins and other Indian toggery, and gave a wild, rambling harangue on the laborer being worthy of his hire. It was a genuine old-timer. When he got through, he ordered the collection box sent round, but when it returned to him his countenance fell and there was blood in his eye. "You Ishmaelites of the desert!" he said, "do you think that I am going to lay church foundations for the fun of it? Do you think that I am going to set up for you a ladder to climb to heaven with and take for myself a willow pole? Do you think that I am going to give you bricks, bread of life, and eggs for your stones and your serpents?" Having put these three searching questions to his hearers, he made a leap from the platform, locked the door, and nailed down the windows before any one could realize what he was doing. Then leaping back on the platform like an Indian mounting his horse, he shouted, "I am a roaring rhinoceros, I am! Am a lion bereft of its pup, I am! Am a grizzly bear, I am! Come away with the shining dust or you will see to-morrow before you see the outside of this church! The box was again sent round, and came back full and running over. Joe glanced at it and said, " That 's the sort of Christians I want you to be in Nevada."

" Parson Riley, pronounce the benediction and open the door."

The wily fox came to me shortly after and said: " These people out here have no respect for a man unless he appears rich. If you can tell them that you own a silver mine out in the mountains, they will drive before you like lambs on the straight and narrow path. Now, brother, I have a mine out in Silver Mountain. It is called the Square Dimond. There 's millions in it. Were I to publish it in New York, you would see some of the big millionaires coming after it. But the brickyard will keep the old man going the rest of his days. Let us go out and see it. I would rather sell it to you than any one else in Nevada, for it would increase your influence mightily with the boys if you could tell them that you had a stake in the country." Out we went, and sure enough, there was the mine about five feet deep, and every inch of it covered with sparkling silver ore.

There was nothing small about Joe, and he said: "I tell you, pard, there's millions in that 'ere hole, and I could get hundreds of thousands for it back East, but if you wish to be a powerful preacher here in Nevada, you want that mine. I will give it to you for five hundred dollars — one hundred dollars cash, and the balance next year. Buy it, parson, and you can rebuke the wicked with boldness." Of course I bought, paid down one hundred dollars, and gave my note for the remainder.

A truthful man told me that he saw Indian Joe removing the blocks of ore which he put in for the purpose. On the day following the sale, I went out to see if it were so, and the round hole was there just where I left it, but the millions were gone. No matter, that hole was the making of me. I owned the Square Dimond, and I preached so boldly and fearlessly against the wicked that the Nevadians used to say that I run the devil out of the State and over into Utah. Even yet people say that I preach too boldly for a poor preacher; but they don't know that I own a mine in Silver Mountain, Nevada.

Your mill property and your railroad stocks may vanish, leaving you as poor as a church mouse, but yonder hole will remain forever. When I want to feel rich as Vanderbilt, I go back to it in thought and look down once again on it as I saw it first. Then I am happy because I am, mentally at least, independently rich.

There were others as well as "Indian Joe," however, who cheated after this fashion, and scooped in many millions from here and Europe—the owners of the Emma mine, for instance. I was located not far from that famous mine and knew from the workmen how the fraud was perpetrated, and on going to Scotland went to Sir Donald Cameron, editor of the Glasgow Mail, and told him of it. He did not credit me at first, as the English deputation had published a glowing report of what they saw. I put a flea in his ear, however, which led to a secret investigation and the bubble burst, but not, I am sorry to say, till thousands of families were ruined.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MORMON.

IN the town of Elko, and other places where money was plentiful in Nevada, the wily Mormon, of both sexes, was wont to visit sometimes on a pious mission, and sometimes on a worldly errand. But be the object what it might, the Latter Day Saint was always sure, in some way or other, to leave the Gentile poorer than he found him.

"Scotch Mary," for instance, was a Mormon wife in Salt Lake City, or, perhaps, what is nearer the truth, she was the tenth part of a wife.

Mary was a knowing one. She came to our town when I was there and started a laundry. She went then around among us young men and borrowed five dollars. Who would not trust her? Did we not sing of Scotland, Annie Laurie, Bonnie Jane, and Highland Mary? This Scotch lass, we said, had been abused by her old Mormon brute of a husband. Mary got our sympathy and used it to her own advantage. After a week or so she came round to us (and we were a great multitude), saying she could not pay back the five dollars in money, but she would in washing. "That 's a good, honest girl," we said. "Would an American girl do that?" Coming to my room, Mary gathered up everything I had in the shape of collars, cuffs, shirts, etc., assuring me that she would return them on the following Saturday night as I needed them for Sunday, and left my hotel with a great burden upon her back. Saturday night came and Sunday, too, but Mary did not. She skipped back to Utah, taking my washing and that of about two dozen other youngsters with her. The most trying thing about it was that I had to announce that on the following Sunday I would be absent, as I had to go to Corinne in Utah, to assist in the dedication of a church. When I made the announcement my congregation laughed in my face, and I could hear them whisper, "He 's going after his washing."

After worship the young men would come to me and say: "Riley, look out for mine; my name is on it." When the train moved out from the station, they cheered and shouted, "Success to the parson and his linen mission!" It made me feel provoked at them, and I wished in my soul that I had not told them that Mary had got me, too, in the same boat they were in. When I come to think of it, this is nothing less than retributive justice for what I had done some twenty years before.

When a boy of twelve or so, it was the joy of my heart to go with other mischievous boys to a public park of Glasgow, Scotland, and there tease a certain Mormon preacher while he expounded the doctrines of the church of "Latter Day Saints." I remember it as if it were yesterday. Said he: "You Scotch are far too holy. David and Solomon, and Jacob and Abraham, were holy, but they had many wives. You people put yourselves above these saints of God."

This was more than we boys could stand, for our ministers told us that we were miserable sinners by nature, and doomed to go to hell. He was an American missionary, and that made it all the more tempting for us to punish him. Perhaps there were two hundred of us, and we crowded and pushed, and we finally threw his stand over and him with it. He had a nice silk hat, and when he and the stand came down to earth I, a most wicked boy, ran off with his hat, kicking it before me. I ruined it beyond recovery, even for a Utah head.

Well, twenty-three years or so passed and I entered Salt Lake City looking for a boarding-house, and keeping an eye open for Scotch Mary; and where did I stumble but into the very home of this man with the long yellow hair from America!

When shown into the parlor by the servant girl I recognized at once a life-sized picture of him on the wall, and was about to make for the door when the landlady entered. Her name was Mrs. De Long. I told her I was visiting in the city, but did not know how long I would remain. I fumbled around in my mind for an excuse for coming in, and in a sort of a far-away talk asked her who was that on the wall, at the same time with an eye on the door.

She informed me that that was her husband, who had been a missionary to Glasgow. "Is he there yet?" I asked. "No," she said. "Where is he?" said I. "He's dead," said she. "Then, madam," said I, "I'll stay with you for a week;" and my spirits came up from my boots. She told me afterwards that he caught cold and died in Glasgow, where he was a missionary. Who knows but on that night, going home bareheaded, he caught his fatal cold? I was kind to that Mormon widow and gave her a good deal more than the hat was worth, but never told her that I knew her husband in Glasgow twenty-three years before. When we got to be on familiar terms with each other she told me that when a husband died Brigham Young required the widows to turn over to him all the property possessed, and then pensioned them with a small trifle, but that she would not submit to that, and he expelled her from the church and handed her over to the buffetings of Satan for a thousand years. She thought Satan did not buffet her any more outside than he did inside the Mormon church. I had a tender regard and a powerful respect for that widow, and although twenty-eight years have passed since, I would like to see her again.

I called on Brigham Young while in the city and found him fixing up some old wagons back of his house. I did not like to approach the great man at first, and asked one of his workmen if that was Brigham Young there, giving directions. "Yes," said he, "that is President Young, and if you wish to see him, go into the office and send for him." "Beg your pardon," said I, "President Young." I went into the office as directed, and the secretary there told me that he was away from home and I could not see him. "Beg your pardon," said I, "he 's out behind, fixing old wagons." "Beg your pardon," said he, "I did n't know it." Presently the "president" was brought in, and he and I talked for a while about things in general, and then I asked him if he knew Scotch Mary. "No," said he, "I don't know Mary, but there is a large number of Scotch women in the territory and they are very good saints too." I told him that I thought they made very good saints when they got to heaven, but from what I had seen of them in Scotland and Nevada I was not quite sure as they ripened good here below. He nodded his head hopefully.

I think Brigham Young was a good man naturally, but terribly troubled at home and abused abroad.

He was a native of Vermont, and properly fed, clothed, and educated from his childhood. He was a Yankee born and raised, but he could not help that. Brigham was a real honest man naturally, but got mixed a little over in England when he was a missionary there. More Americans than Brigham Young get mixed there, too. Like Brigham, Solomon was a wise man, but if he had come to England he would have got mixed up worse than he was, so that in his old days he would not know whether he was a saint or a sinner.

Solomon in all his glory was not as good a man as Brigham. Perhaps he had more wives than Brigham had, but he was not tried as Brigham was. Brigham had red-headed Welsh women in his harem, and Solomon did not. He (Solomon) had black-haired Ethiopians and Moabites and lovely Jewish maidens, and that made all the difference between misery and happiness. Brigham was a kind-hearted man, but Uncle Sam's Camp Douglas above his city prevented him from treating his wives as kings do in Asia.

He and I got very gracious together over a cup of tea, for it was about five o'clock when I called on him. Brigham was a goodly man to look upon. He was tall and straight as a pine of the Sierras, and royal looking as old King William of Germany. His head was like a towering peak of the Rockies and white as Mount Shasta in summer. After we had supped our tea we took a walk in his magnificent garden behind his "Beehive," and there he said to me: "Mr. Riley, you know that I am very much married. You know also that the opinion prevails among the Gentiles, and the Mormons also, that I like this sort of thing, but they are all very much mistaken. You are a Scotchman, I believe, and a Presbyterian minister? Well, the Scotch are good people and better than their church, and I want you to do me justice when I am dead!" I assured him that I would if I did not die myself before him. "Well, you are young," he said, "and likely to be around above when I am asleep below, and so I will tell you the secret of my life, and I wish you to publish it when I am gone. When I married my first wife, I had no idea of ever having any other than her. She was all the world to me, and I loved her like a very sister. But after I lived a few years with her she became cross and cranky, and I had very little pleasure in her company. She thought that she could rule me. To show her that she could not, I went and took another wife, and told the first one that the Lord told me to, and she must submit to the will of the Lord. The second wife, after a time, got to be like the first; and I then told them both that the Lord had told me to lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes of my tent, and took a third and a fourth and a fifth, and I found that they were all alike I stopped awhile at the fifth, and thought that was enough, but yet I had a yearning for the true and the beautiful and the good in womankind. I could not find these heavenly qualities in them, and so when they had me fairly on the road, I kept on going in search of my ideal, taking them as they came in my way, hoping that some day I would come across the dear, loving creature I sighed for. I wanted one that would love me and keep silent when I wanted to think, and that would not dun me for something I had not to give. So the sad story went on from year to year, and I kept adding to the number of my wives, but the one I wanted never turned up. The lovely creature before my eye was always away off on the far mountains, and when I came up to her she vanished like a snowflake on the river — 'a moment white, and then gone forever.' In a dream which I had upon my pillow one night, I saw a fair and lovely maiden on this side the Rocky Mountains, with large, lustrous eyes; her form was perfect as a cedar of Lebanon, and her countenance was like the lily of the valley, and her demeanor was beautifully submissive. She was a sort of an Indian maiden with black hair and bare feet, and she was like unto those in the Bible who publish peace upon the mountains; and I said unto my people: 'Behold the land of promise beyond the Rockies; arise, and let us go hence, for the Lord thinks well concerning Zion.' Well, they did arise and follow me, and after terrible hardships we came out here; but the maiden my soul yearned for, and whom I thought I saw in my dream, I have not yet met. I have wept for her in solitude, but I cannot find her. And so out here I have kept on marrying and marrying, but mine eyes do not behold her. The lovely creature my soul yearns for is not on this side the mountains, and now that I am old, I cannot go back to Vermont, where I spent my boyhood. I don't know how many I have married, but it matters little, and I am getting discouraged. I tell you the honest truth, Mr. Riley, it is impossible for a man to be a good prophet, preacher, or saint and be fixed as I am. These women I have married are the plague of my life. They keep pulling at my coat tails for this and that from morning till night.

"The heifers, too, weary the life out of me with their small talk against each other. I would be free to go about my master's business, but they hinder me at every point. If I show any favor to one more than another, there is trouble on my hands at once. They watch my movements, too, like birds of prey, and so retard the growth of Zion. Only but yesterday I was drinking a cup of tea with Amelia, and she began to upbraid me for being so much in the company of Zephina, whom she called an 'ugly old scratch.' When I told her not to rebuke a prophet of the Lord, she put her feet against her little round table, threw it, with dishes and all, over me, saying as she did so, 'Prophet of the devil!' I ran out into the hallway, and who was there but Zephina, listening through the keyhole; and when I looked to her for comfort, she said: 'Serves you right, you old fool! What business have you calling on that wild cat so often, any way?' So I am watched and kicked by these untamed mustangs continually. Even when I stand up in the tabernacle yonder to preach the truth of Zion, they are there by the score, not to listen and learn, but to make faces at me."

After he delivered himself of this tale of woe he invited me into the sitting-room, and we were no sooner seated than a tall, lank woman with a sunburned face came in from the street, saying as she entered, "How are you, Mr. President?" "Who are you?" said the president. "Don't you remember me, dear? I am one of your wives." "When did I marry you?" was the next question from Brigham. "Why, have you forgotten? It was when we were crossing the plains." Her reply did not seem satisfactory and he called to his secretary to bring him the record book. On looking through it for a while he said sadly, in a half whisper, "Well, your name is here." Then handing the book back to his secretary he asked her, "How have you been doing?" "Oh, fairly well; my son and I work on a farm together, but I thought I would call in to see if you could n't give us a little lift," was her reply. To this Brigham said, "I am busy now, woman; come back again."

When she was gone, turning to me he said: "That, you see, is the way they eternally trouble me for what they call their little lifts, and when I give them all the lifts they want there is nothing of myself to lift. If I had this thing to do over again, I would go to the land of the Turk and lift them as the Turk does. Yes, I would silence their gabbling and their begging for lifts. Here I have not the freedom that a prophet should have, for your miserable Gentile government is against me. A man in marrying," he went on, "should be careful. He should know well the stock the wife is of, and after he takes her home he should teach her to obey, and never allow himself to be controlled. Wealth, position, and education are nothing. Blood counts for everything. Some families have a streak of wolf to them, and no amount of outside polishing will avail anything. I took once a little red-headed Welsh girl to be wife, and Satan himself could not get along with her. A man in taking a bad-tempered woman into his bosom is only taking the fires of hell there, and when the fires die out they both fall into the bottomless pit. There, too, are my sons, some of them growing up like wild asses of the desert. They take after their mothers as they are good or bad, and they are mostly bad; yes, they are all bad. But the other day one of them went galloping up and down the street there in front of my house with brush tied to his horse's tail, and raising the dust at a furious rate. I ran out to stop him, asking 'if he had not done yet with sowing his wild oats,' and he told me 'to get out of the way, that he was sweeping them in.'

"That 's how I am treated on every side, and my life is a sore trial to me."

After this we strolled down the street to the University and he showed me everything there of interest. He also gave me a catalogue of the University, and in looking over it I observed that out of about five hundred students there were nearly two hundred Youngs there. I laughingly asked him if these were all his. He replied: "Well, friend, they say that most of them are, but the Lord only knows. One thing I do know, I am too much married, and it 's a complete failure." At the gate outside he told me again the secret of his polygamous marriages, and, as a great favor, asked me to put him right with the world when he was dead, which I have now done. After warmly shaking hands we parted, and we never met again. The doctors said at the time of his death that he died from eating too much green corn, but I am almost sure that he died of a broken heart. The man was abused to death by his sixty or seventy temporal wives, to say nothing of his thousands of spiritual ones. History tells not the truth about Brigham Young, and people imagine that he was a great, coarse, sensual monster. Nothing of the sort. He was only voyaging around on troubled waters, looking, as he told me, for the true, the beautiful, and the good in womankind. That he died disappointed, discouraged, and broken-hearted is the truth, known to few but myself. I was to keep it secret till he was under the sod, for he feared what might happen if his women found it out.

Let not the world abuse Brigham Young. He was a good man, a warm-hearted man, a generous, noble-minded man, who tried hard to make marriage a success but failed.

Peace be to his ashes, and may his soul have a quiet nook in the happy land where there is neither marrying nor quarreling!

It was my lot to visit other parts of Utah when beyond the Rockies, and being curious to see how the Mormons lived, I mingled freely with them. I found that the wives of the Latter Day Saints were, as a rule, very obedient and submissive to their husbands. We wonder sometimes East how a man can support so many wives, but the truth is, the more wives a man has the better he is off. These women are not like ours; when told to go out and work in the fields they go without a murmur. I think Brigham's wives were trying to put on many airs; they were not fair specimens. I saw in one of the southern valleys of Utah one day ten women harrowing, and they did it nicely. With five poles, one at each end, they pulled the harrows quite easily. The husband of these women had wealth in them, for they saved him buying horses. Their children too, about two dozen of them, were following after, gathering stones. The more wives a good Mormon has the more prosperous he is here, and the more blest he is hereafter, for they all go with him to heaven.

You must not suppose, however, from

what I have said that I believe in the institution of polygamy. One man one woman marriage is the divine ideal, and any system that interferes with this is wrong and degrading to all concerned.

The Mormon system is an abomination which should not have been allowed to exist in this country for a single day.

The Mormon idea of woman is borrowed from the Orient and should have no footing, not for a moment, in the Occident. It is based solely on the requirements of mere animal pleasures, and the outcome is slavery, hatred, and mental death. No true love or family life can exist where it predominates. From the Oriental marriage comes the barbarian, from the Occidental comes the gentleman; two individuals separated in instinct by the poles of the universe; for the one by nature knows how to hate, therefore learns to kill as easily as to breathe; the other knows how to love, therefore readily learns to suffer and through suffering leads the race to glory. Man cannot lower woman without falling himself into degradation; he cannot elevate her without being himself made better. He must either be a beast in her arms, or an angel at her feet. The Mormon ſeeds his horses, like the tyrant of old, on human flesh, and is himself devoured by them.

CHAPTER XV.

TEXAS.

LEAVING for a time the frontier, I took hold in Uncle Sam's official city, on the banks of the Potomac, where I freed a small church from a big debt, built another over the river, and taught theology in Howard University. But the desire for the front again grew on me so strong that I could not resist it and I therefore started for Texas.

On reaching the Lone Star State, I went straight to the front, nearly seven hundred miles west, from the eastern line, where the soldiers, the cowboys, and the buffalo hunters mingled together, sometimes like wild beasts of the forest. A frontier town in Texas was a lively place to live in then; you were never lonesome there, for the music of the saloon and the revolver reached you even in bed at night; and in the morning when you arose and went out, you could wile away an hour or so looking up dead bodies for burial.

I remember how delighted an old Nevada miner was next morning after his arrival. On seeing a dead body on the street which had been killed the night before, he gave a yell like a Comanche and said, "Golly! I'll stay here! This reminds me of Nevada."

Texas is as large as seven of the largest States in the Union. It has had a wild and romantic history from its earliest settlement. The native Texan has much reason to be proud of his State, and as a rule he is. It is a grand State in many respects. In recent years it has developed with wonderful rapidity.

In this great State of nearly a thousand miles square, I have had even more than in Nevada of frontier life, and some of it was quite exciting. Shortly after my arrival I came pretty near getting shot. I was on my way to Presbytery on horseback and had about three hundred miles to travel.

One day I came to a river overflowing and red as paint with the red soil of the country. There was no bridge, and I had to swim it. So in order to keep my sermons dry I stripped, and tying them up in my clothing, I tied the bundle behind my neck, jumped into the saddle and plunged in. On reaching the other side, my horse could not scramble upon the bank and I swam it down a half a mile, looking for an easy landing place. Just as I was about to reach such a spot, I saw a man and woman in a field near by, she running to the house and he running with his gun towards me. He fired, and I threw up my hands, shouting for dear life not to kill me. He then came down to the river bank and helped my horse and his rider out of the water. The water of the river being red, my skin was red also, and the honest farmer took me for a Comanche, for he never before heard of or saw a white man strip to swim a river. I told him I was a preacher going to Presbytery and stripped to keep my sermons dry. He laughed heartily and proposed that I remain overnight, and he would gather in the neighbors to see if my sermons were wet or dry. I remained over and preached, and at the close of the service he got up and said that my sermons were not dry at all, and of course were not fit to be carried in my saddlebags; that I had better wait over a few days till they got dry. But I had to go, for there were other rivers to cross and many miles before me. Those people so far out on the frontier were an intelligent and kindly people. They were from the old Southern States mostly, and a sermon once in a while from a passing preacher was to them like an oasis in the desert.

As a rule, the early Texas settler was strong in the faith. Uncle Joe Harrison was a veteran Mexican soldier, a fair specimen of a frontier Christian, and a good Methodist, but he went a-roving one day and fell from grace, and they excommunicated him. Coming into my church on the following Sunday, he stood up and, pointing to heaven, shouted, "They may put the old man out of the church below, but his name is written up yonder!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COWBOY.

THE old-time Texas cowboy, like the old miners of the Pacific Coast, is passing away. The Texas cowboy of to-day is a spoiled man, like the sailor of to-day. The one is still at home in the saddle, and the other on the deck, but the wire fence has ruined Dick, and the steam engine has done the same to Jack.

The real Texas cowboy was not, as a rule, a native. He came there because he was wanted somewhere else. Sometimes you would find him well educated and a graduate of some of our Northern colleges or those of England. Generally speaking, he was reckless, would ride his horse into a saloon and pop away at the bottles and mirrors, or perhaps paint a town red in the night. He dearly loved to wear leather breeches, wide-brimmed hats, and carry a revolver in his belt.

When sober he was a good-natured fellow and very companionable on the prairie, but when drunk you had better put as much prairie between you and him as possible. When he got religion he got it on a large scale. There, for instance, was Jerry Simpson. When Jerry got religion he claimed that he was as good as any man mentioned in the Bible. His fellow cowboys maintained that he was not, for they could not believe that he was as good as Jesus. Jerry maintained that he was, and would prove it if they put him to the test. So they put a rope around his neck and led him to a place of trial, spitting on him, cuffing him and calling him all sorts of vile names. They put a crown of prickly pears on his brow and mocked him. But Jerry was meek and lowly, blessing those who cursed him, and forgiving those who smote him. At last they made a large cross, tied it on his back, and led him up the side of a hill to crucify him. He was still like a lamb being led to the slaughter, as he said, but one of the boys, who was more wicked than his companions, struck him in the face with a rotten egg. Jerry stood still, wiped slowly the egg from his face and said, "Boys, this Jesus business is over. Take off the cross." They did so, and then there was a stampede of those boys, such as only cowboys know, when a herd of cattle take fright. The swearing and tearing of Jerry after those unbelievers that day were long remembered in the neighborhood.

There were cunning rogues among those Texas cowboys too, just as among the Nevada miners. The Texas bird was very fond of a good horse, and he envied any who might possess one.

Sam Johnson, of Scrub Oak Valley, came to me one day and said: "Parson Riley, we be mighty bad sinners out in our valley, that we be. We need prayin' for powerfully bad, that we do. We needs the gospel out thar as bad as we need rain for our crops and grass for our critters, an' there is no one to give it to us but Sister Henson, an' she 's a shoutin' Methodist. We will all go to hell but Sister Henson if we don't get the gospel. We likes the Presbyterian Gospel, an' we wants you to come out an' give it to us. We thinks it 's more savin' than the Baptist or Methodist.

We wants you to brand us with your gospel irons, for we be running wild like mustangs in the woods. We want you, Parson, to lasso us, and burn the gospel onto us; and Sister Henson will take care of you over the night."

What preacher could reject such a Macedonian call for religion? The time and place being fixed on, Sam returned to Scrub Oak Valley with bright visions. At the appointed time I was on hand, lariated my horse out on the prairie, preached to the "mustangs," and put myself under the protecting wing of Sister Henson for the night.

Before the next daylight my fine bay horse left for the Indian nation, taking unholy Sam on its back, and I had to foot it home twenty miles. I fear that I did not brand the cunning mustang deep enough. He did not make much of it, however, for I had him arrested and tried. He got five years in the penitentiary, and while working out his time, with a squad of other prisoners, made a break for liberty and was shot dead by the guard.

Sometimes the Texas cowboy had an eye

to the main chance, and when he did, he increased greatly in wealth, and is now perhaps a banker.

There, for instance, is old Bill Taylor of Dallas. Before the war he might be seen prowling through the cedar brakes of Palo Pinto, and you would not give five cents for all that was on him, with his carcass thrown in. And as for school learning, if it had the smallpox, he would n't have caught it. But Bill kept on running cattle for wages, and when he could conveniently do so, branded a few yearlings for himself. Then the war broke out, and every patriotic citizen took to the field of blood, but Bill took to preaching and branding mavericks. While others were laying waste and destroying life, Bill would be spreading himself, the gospel, and his cattle over all the land.

He took his branding irons in one hand and the Bible in the other, and he made a wonderful impression in favor of Bill Taylor. He had more faith in the Bible and branding irons than he had in the sword for the extension of Bill's kingdom. Sometimes on a Sunday, when he would be preaching in the woods to his fellow-sinners, a passing maverick would be spied. A stampede of the congregation would follow, and foremost in the fray would be Bill, throwing the lariat and claiming the beast as his for the collection. The time came when Bill's cattle roamed and ate grass all over Northwestern Texas, and to-day he is worth his millions, has a bank, and lives in lordly style. There has always been more religion in Texas than in Nevada.

This can be proven by the prayer offered by old Tim White, a cow man, when hostile Indians surrounded his house and he felt that his hour of reckoning had come. Here it is: "O Lord, thou knowest that I have been baptized twice; that I have kept the faith, and entertained the preachers. Everything is straight but the cow book. Square it, good Lord, and then let the Indians shoot." In the cow book was recorded the number of cattle branded. It was considered square when a man branded only his own yearlings.

CHAPTER XVII.

TRICKY FELLOWS.

THEY were tricky dogs also, those Texas cowboys. If I rode with them on the prairies, they would be sure to come to rivers where we would have to swim our horses. They liked to see the parson get under the water, for, somehow or other, they had more faith in his preaching when they knew that he had been immersed.

My horse at first was a little afraid of water, being a good Presbyterian, but he got used to it and rather liked the fun and exhilaration of the plunge.

Having preached for several days in a town near the Red River, I left to return home. I was gone about three miles, when a deputy sheriff came galloping after me with a warrant for my arrest, charging me with stealing a bridle. I protested, but searching my saddlebags, sure enough, he found the bridle. I was led back to the

Court House in shame and confusion of face, and placed before the justice of the peace, who gravely heard the charge against me and my plea of innocency. Then he summed up with all the seriousness imaginable, pronouncing me guilty, and sentenced me to preach to the boys for a week, which I did, and I trust to their good. It was all a cowboy's lark. In another town, shortly after I went to Texas, the young men of the place insisted one night that I should go out hunting with them. They wanted to bag, they said, a certain bird in that country that could not fly, for it had but very short wings. Believing the rogues, I went with them. When we got about two miles out of town, they stopped at the foot of a tall hill and said: "Now, Parson Riley, this is the way we hunt these birds: You stay here and hold this empty sack over this sheep trail, and we will go up to the top of the hill and drive them down into your sack. They can't see in the night, but they will run along this little trail into the open mouth of the sack, and when it is full, whistle to us." I waited all night holding the open mouth of that sack over the sheep trail, and went home in the morning feeling that I wanted to — well, preach to somebody.

Great was the cowboy's love of playing pranks on a stranger from the old States, especially if said stranger was disposed to put on airs. A St. Louis drummer realized this once to his mortification in the town I lived in. He came westward from Fort Worth City in a stylish buggy drawn by a fine span of horses, and for his guide a negro driver in livery. Putting up at one of our hotels, he requested the landlady to give him a suite of her best rooms for dining and sleeping in, as he was "a first-class commercial traveler representing a first-class house in St. Louis," and did not care to eat his food in the common dining-room. The obliging old lady complied, but told the boys, who went to the sheriff and swore out a warrant against him for stealing his buggy and horses. He was taken and placed in the county jail in spite of his protestations that he was a first-class commercial traveler, representing a first-class house in St. Louis, and innocent of horse stealing. Procuring a lawyer at a cost of five hundred dollars, he appeared for trial before the county judge on the morrow. By this time judge, sheriff, prosecuting attorney, and all were in the plot to teach this uppish drummer to eat with common folks and put up with such quarters as the country might afford. A jury was regularly impaneled, and before it the county attorney made a scathing speech against the prisoner, who, he said, went about among simple-minded Texans, putting on airs, stealing horses, and pretending to be selling St. Louis goods when he really should be in the penitentiary. It was one of the most eloquent and denunciatory frontier speeches I ever listened to, and the poor prisoner fairly quailed under it. The attorney for the defence was no less, apparently, earnest for his client's rescue from the clutches of the law. "Gentlemen of the jury," he would say, while he slapped the prisoner's bald head till it blistered, "can you for a moment imagine that this gentleman, this first-class commercial traveler from St. Louis, would be guilty of such a thing as horse stealing? Why, gentlemen, look at that noble brow;

look at these kindly eyes ; look at the elegant dress and refined manners of my client." In this strain, for at least half an hour, he pathetically pleaded for the prisoner's release. Then, after the prosecuting attorney had spoken again, the judge began summing up. He did fairly well for about five minutes, when he broke out into a wild burst of laughter and ran from the Court House. The sheriff, the lawyers, the jury, and the assembled crowd followed suit, roaring with laughter. The astonished prisoner was left alone to realize that it was all a practical joke. It, however, taught him to be a little more lowly in his manners when he came to our village again.

Sam Crowley was a born cowboy, and raised in the saddle from childhood. A jovial, good-natured fellow was Sam, with a smiling face; and an extraordinary cheek to it made Sam in the course of time one of the principal cattle men of Northwestern Texas, and a deacon in my church. His little boy, who did not understand the importance of his father's ecclesiastical standing, used to go about telling with pride to other boys that his "dad" was the "dickins in the church," and I had to teach him the great difference there was between "deacon" and "dickins."

Sam Crowley was a generous, liberal-hearted man and used to brand a yearling for me, for every sermon I preached. Ministers of the gospel were honored for their work's sake in Texas as they are not up here in the North. I will always reckon Sam as among the best of deacons I have yet met anywhere. He was none of your small men, but a whole-souled, good fellow who would give you his last dollar if you were in need, whether it was his own money or somebody else's capital.

In an evil hour a number of his fellow-cattle men, believing that the gentlemanly manners, the ecclesiastical standing, and the good name of this pillar of my church was just the man they wanted to go on a mission to England where the people were all supposed to be Christians, and had more money than they knew what to do with, came to him with letters of credit and said, "Go, and the Lord be with thee"; and he went. The object of the mission was not exactly religious, or political, but financial.

In London Sam lived at one of the grandest hotels of the city, in style becoming a deacon of my church, and the land and cattle interests of Northern Texas. It was nothing less than the organization of a mammoth Anglo-Texan Land and Cattle Company that was in view; a company that would be given millions of acres and the cattle of a thousand hills.

The titled nobility, both political and ecclesiastical, took to Sam as if a very brother. They dined and wined this simple-hearted prairie deacon of mine in style such as he never had dreamed of enjoying in this life.

Dining with Lord Thurlow, the queen's head chamberlain, at his castle, he actually had twelve courses of the best "grub," he told me, that any mortal man ever ate, served by a waiter dressed in a red coat with gold buttons, knee breeches, silk stockings, slippers on his feet and a powdered wig on his head; and he had him, too, all to himself, standing behind his chair and attending to him as if he were a prince of the blood. There were ten or twelve others present, dukes and lords, as well as Lord Thurlow, and each had, like himself, a waiter to change his gold plates and fill his glasses.

In describing this grand occasion said he, "Never will I forget that dinner; you could n't get the like of it in Texas if you paid a thousand dollars for it." In return for the hospitalities shown, Sam was generous, for there was nothing small about him, and at his hotel he entertained some of the "swellest Britishers" in the kingdom. He contemplated inviting even the queen to his dinners, but the Prince of Wales told him that she had the rheumatism at the time.

The result of it all was that the great Texas Cattle Company was formed with Lord Thurlow as president. There was an immense rush for the stock, lest the Scotch or American capitalists should get hold of it first. So that Texas Cattle Company and Sam Crowley were on the lip and in the heart of every Englishman who had money to lend with a view to getting twenty-five per cent. interest for it instead of three per cent. in home investments. The board of managers met one night when they were ready to pay Sam his commission, which was sixty thousand dollars, also to hand over the first instalment on the Texas property, which was one million dollars, and also to have papers signed making Sam the manager of the concern at twenty thousand dollars a year.

Everything was moving along beautifully, and the words of wisdom that dropped from Sam's lips were like honey from the honeycomb, when, sad to relate, an "old heathen Scotch banker," doing business in London, suggested that before they signed papers or handed over this enormous amount of money to a man they had never seen before, they had better first send two practical men, who had been to Texas and knew the laws there, to examine the deeds to the land and count the cattle. Sam's heart went down to his boots and his face lost its glow, but it would never do for him to object in case he might "be arrested and put in the Tower," so he "spoke as philosophically as he could," and kept his countenance straight till he got outside and then skipped with the first steamer to America, and such was his haste that he forgot to pay his hotel bill till he got home. The telegrams arriving every day for the cattle men of Texas, up to this disastrous point, were so full of cheer that arrangements had been actually made, including a brass band, to give the successful financier a tremendous reception when the train arrived at Fort Bellnapp, his home. He was to be taken through the main streets of the city in a carriage drawn by four white horses. But the deacon did not believe in such worldly displays and slipped out on arrival at the back end of the train and was lost in the darkness of night before any one could see him. He was waited upon on the following day by the party who sent him to present their congratulations, and that party was again on the same day waited upon by a messenger from the Bank of England for fifty thousand dollars, the same being what was spent by it in keeping up Sam's credit.

Sam was a very humble, good Christian man after his trip to London, and that is more than most Christians can say, and those pious cattle men who tempted him to develop the beautiful idea of fleecing the English lords, got fleeced themselves instead, for they had to pay the good deacon's expenses, and when the hard-hearted, cruel investigators came and saw what there was of the land, the cattle, and the deeds they went back and told the great Anglo-Texan Land and Cattle Company to let the Lone Star State alone, and turn their attention to Africa; which they did.

A good many people to-day, both in the North, in Scotland, and England, wish that they had never invested a dollar in Texas lands and Texas cattle. People should look before they jump.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DANGEROUS FELLOWS.

RIDING into a lazy-looking town not far from the Rio Grande River one day, I hitched my horse to a post opposite a saloon and was about to hunt up the postoffice, when a crowd of the toughs of the place gathered about me, asking where I came from. They then invited me to come in and have a drink with them. I declined. "Wall," they said, "there 's galls and tobacco and cards in har." I declined again with thanks. "Do you never drink whiskey, play cards, or go with the galls?" said a murderous-looking rascal. I again answered in the negative. "He 's a tenderfoot!" shouted another; "let's chuck him in the river." "Do you ever steal cattle?" asked still another. I said "No." "Do you pray?" "Yes." "Go to Sunday-school?" "Yes." "Gad, yer a preacher!" "That 's what I am, boys," I replied. "Well, b' Gad, turn her loose.

Let 's have a sermon so as we can write home that we 's been to church." "All right, boys, round 'em up!" I said. In an hour or so there were several hundred of as hard a looking crowd before me in a hall over the saloon, as I ever looked upon, and I preached them one of my best sermons, to which they listened attentively, but an old negro who was present upset everything. In my closing prayer I prayed fervently that the Lord would curtail the power of Satan in that place, and the old darky shouted, "Yes, Lord, cut 'im's tail off cl'ar up to the ears!" There was an immediate stampede downstairs, and when I got through there were only myself and my black brother present. I lost the collection too.

The Rev. Frank Waters was preaching in Texas when I went there. He was a Presbyterian preacher now, but used to be an officer in the Confederate Army during the war. He was a splendid fellow and was popular with the boys wherever he went. But, like myself, he would occasionally lose a horse at the hands of thieving cutthroats. Doing missionary work not far from the Red River, which separates Texas from the Indian nation, his horse was stolen one evening while he was at supper, and it made him wish that he was back in the army again. A dozen or so of the young men of the place buckled on their revolvers, and followed him out into the country to hunt for the thief.

They spied him going at an easy trot about four miles out. Pretending that they were going to pass him on the gallop, one of them dashed up close and jerked the revolver from the thief's belt. Quick as lightning another lassoed him, and in that condition drove on till they came to a large oak tree. Making him ride in below it, the rope was soon over a limb and fastened to a stump in the ground. The boys then looked at the parson and asked him what he was going to do with his horse. "Well," said the parson, "it is none of my business how that thief got into that saddle. I am going to take my horse;" and so saying took hold of the bridle and led his horse away. The man with the lariat about his neck having neither saddle to sit on nor earth to stand on, could not draw his breath, and died.

When they went back home it was asked who did the hanging. The man who took the revolver out of the belt said he did not; the man who threw the lariat over his neck said he did not; the man who threw it over the limb said he did not; the man who tied it to the stump said he did not; and the parson said he did not; he only took his horse, which he had a right to do wherever he found it. Just who did the hanging the community could not decide, and did not care. They told the sheriff that the man must have put his head in the noose himself by accident, and the sheriff left him there for a week, dangling in the wind, in the hopes that others of his tribe might go and do likewise. But they did n't, they skipped the country. The thief was a very bad character any way, and had several nicks in the ivory handle of his revolver, that were to keep him in mind of the number he had killed. He was a desperado of the worst sort, and neither the preacher nor those who helped him had any other feeling than that they had done their duty. The country was better off with the thief's head in the noose than his legs in the saddle, and all the people thanked the parson for his good sense, and attended his preaching better than they ever did before.

Eating my noonday meal on the banks of a stream one hot day in summer, a young man came riding along the main road near by, and invited himself to partake with me. I made no objections, for I was lonely, the nearest settlement being twenty miles away. He was very companionable, and told me that he was from the North, but left there for some reason he did not tell me. He was going to the same town, too, that I was, so after we had rested in the shade a while, we mounted and rode at a fast trot. When we came within a mile of the place he wheeled his horse about, and, with revolver in hand, said: "Fork over your gold watch and everything else that glitters, or you 're a dead goner! Am Jack Shephard!"

He was a highwayman and I did not know it. There was nothing for me but to obey orders; and I did so, like a soldier. When he had all my valuables he told me to ride on to town, and if I told on him he would waylay and kill me on the morrow.

I rode on and told every one I met. In an hour or so I was riding with a brave band of men in search of him. We got on his trail and came up close to him, but he had a magnificent horse and he bade us good by. He went, unfortunately for him, in the direction of a town to which we could telegraph, and we did so, to the sheriff of that county. He did n't know that we could do so, and when he was drinking his coffee next morning at the suburbs of the place the sheriff came on him with a posse of well-armed men and called to him to surrender.

Jack Shephard showed fight, and he got it. When it was over the sheriff dug a hole and put him in it, and his mother in the North is still wondering why her boy who went to Texas don't write her.

On another occasion I was returning from one of my preaching stations through a lonely wood, when I was met on the highway by two men on foot, carrying guns upon their shoulders, who were arrayed in Indian blankets and had their faces daubed with paint. At sight of them my horse trembled in every fibre of its body and refused to advance.

I confess that I myself did not feel in any bolder frame of mind, and would gladly have wheeled about and run, but for the fact that I was at least ten miles from any settlement to the rear of me, and a bullet from their guns could easily catch me. I therefore concluded to urge my horse on and take my chances. Coming up to the would-be Indians, who now stood still in the middle of the road and eyed myself and horse in anything but a kindly manner, I could see that they were really white men. Indeed, they were hard, suspicious, ugly-looking tramps of the worst character, as I could see the closer I got to them. One of them took hold of the bridle and remarked to his companion that my horse resembled very much the one they had lost, and looking up at me, asked where did I get it. I replied that it was none of his business where I got it, and to let go the bridle instantly or I would blow his brains out, and made with my right hand as if I would pull a revolver from my hip pocket. Then, quick as thought, I planted the spurs in the flanks of my fleet-footed beast, and like a flash of lightning it sprang forward, pitching one of the rascals aside and the other on his back. It was a critical moment, and what was to be done had to be done quickly; and instinct seemed to teach my horse the same truth, for it ran with almost the swiftness of a bird through space, while its rider, casting himself forward, hung on to its neck by his right arm and to its back by his right leg, Indian fashion, thus putting himself in a safer position in case they fired on him. This they did not fail to do as soon as they got themselves righted. One bullet struck a tree as I passed it, and another whistled over my head unpleasantly near. Three or four shots were fired altogether, but fortunately none of them struck me. My assailants were dangerous tramps, who probably knew that I would be coming that Monday morning that way, so fixed themselves up as they did, with a view to frightening me into giving them my horse on demand, but the plot miscarried. It did n't pay always to fool with the preachers in Texas.

CHAPTER XIX.

TRAIN AND LAND ROBBERS.

TRAIN robbing used to be as common in Texas a few years back, as stage coach robbing was in Nevada twenty-five years ago.

Indeed in Texas this daring business seemed to flourish for a time as nowhere else, and the robbers became bold and fat on it. Not far from where I preached, they used to stop the Texas Pacific Railroad trains, get on board and go through the cars, one holding his hat, and two behind him with cocked revolvers, saying, "Contribute to the poor." And in this way they usually got a hatful of money, for the passengers, both male and female, were only too glad to contribute to have them pass on. Those bold knights of the road, too, seemed to know in advance when there was something valuable in the mail bags, for they invariably struck it rich when they ripped open Uncle

Sam's leather bags. That wild, broken country you see in passing through Palo Pinto was generally their headquarters, and there it was supposed they lived in style, after the manner of the knights of old in Europe. So frequent did these robberies become, that I used to keep a sharp eye on the collection box after sermon till the benediction was pronounced, lest they should make a dash for it.

We used to have lots of small lawyers and real estate agents who were very dishonest, too, in Texas. I knew one who fraudulently claimed a few hundred acres of land north of Fort Worth, and he had the cheek to measure it off into lots and streets and erect a great signboard with hands painted on it, one pointing to New York and the other to San Francisco. He then published all over the North and West that he owned this "city" through which a through train from New York to San Francisco would pass immediately. The whole scheme was fraudulent, but he made lots of money before the location of his city lots and his rascality were found out.

This same lawyer, to my knowledge, was often guilty of setting neighbor against neighbor, that he might make a fee defending either of them in court. Two intimate friends of mine, one an Englishman and the other a Scotchman, both farmers, had a little difference over a cow, and finding it out, he went to the Englishman and told him that for five dollars he could make his the cow in dispute. Once in court, the cow was kept there until more than twice her value was spent on lawyers. The Scotchman finally got possession of the cow, but that did not end the trouble, for on meeting afterwards, the Englishman pulled his little cannon and shot the Scotchman in the left leg about the knee so badly that he (the Scotchman) lost one half of said limb; and for mischievous fooling with firearms the Englishman got one year in the penitentiary. Nor did this wholly end the trouble, for a certain preacher of the place, who was full of holy indignation at the wicked lawyer for the part he had played in bringing on the trouble between the two honest country neighbors, coming up to him one day when he was standing with his back against the Court House, planted his left hand under his chin, pinning him to the wall, and rained sledge-hammer blows on his face, quoting as he did so certain suitable passages of Scripture. While this operation was going on, the lawyer kept yelling to those looking on, "Take him off there; take him off there," but they did n't until the preacher got through with him. Then it was the preacher's turn to be hauled into court for mischievously bruising the lawyer's face, and he was fined ten dollars and costs; but so pleased were the good people of his church with his spunk, that they paid all the expenses incurred.

I would not justify this mode of administering the law and the gospel in all similar cases when the wicked lawyers deserve it, and yet there may be times when this is the best and only method of reaching their conscience.

I had one of these gentry in my church down there. He was even an elder and a Sabbath-school superintendent. He was from Indiana, and his name was Jacobs. This one-horse lawyer, when he first came to us, lived on a farm of ten acres, just outside the county seat, but that little farm grew to a thousand acres, yet Jacobs was not happy.

He ate mush and milk three times a day, and his wife mended his old blue jeans every morning. Still he was inconsolable. Over the way was Naboth Washington, and he had a goodly little farm of eighty acres. Jacobs coveted Naboth's vineyard, and his heart was weary within him, and his life was a sore burden to him. One day, while looking over the fence, a beautiful and brilliant idea struck him, just such as used to come to him away up in Indiana. Then said he to himself: "I will take my plow and cover it up in yonder ditch by his barn, then I will publish that some one has stolen it; and then with a witness I will stumble accidentally on it in the old darky's ditch. After that I will have him arrested and put in jail. Then Naboth will be glad to sign me a deed for his farm to get out." The idea developed into realization, and one morning Jacobs entered the prison cell where Naboth was weeping and waiting for trial and said: "Here, nigger, sign this deed or I will send you five years to the penitentiary, and mind you don't tell this to any one—not to a living soul, or I will put a bullet in you." "Yes, massa; bress de Lord, Ise sign it an' nebber tell nobody neither," replied the poor old darky, wiping his eyes.

Many months passed, and Naboth let the pig out of the bag, and it ran round the whole town, telling how Naboth lost his farm and how Jacobs found it. I had Jacobs relieved of the care of the Sunday-school, tried before the church session, and expelled. But Jacobs was industrious as well as dark in some of his ways, and he went among his friends in a slow, lazy fashion, and spoke against me as a disturber of the church and a shepherd that was not able to feed the flock. And — how strange life is! — some of the very people who shouted most for his trial and punishment were the first to side with him and against me. So I bade that church good by, and I suppose they have Jacobs as shepherd, feeding them now. The preacher who will do his whole duty towards the goats of the flock will very often come to grief. If the goats would remain goats after you have separated them from the sheep, it would be all right, but they won't; they become wolves in sheep's clothing. Such is the transforming power of Satan in the church.

CHAPTER XX.

LONELY TRAVELING.

TRAVELING alone through the wild woods of Northwestern Texas twenty years ago was dreary business, and when it rained it was doubly so. One night I came to a log cabin by the roadside and asked permission to stay there overnight, as both myself and horse were tired and hungry. The man who came to the gate was deaf and dumb, but he understood my wants, and, taking the bridle of my horse, motioned to me to go inside. On entering, I was met by an old lady, who was also deaf and dumb. She had a strange look about her, and when she saw that I was dripping wet she gave me a jerk up to the fire and motioned to me to stand there. In the mean time she went into the kitchen to prepare supper for me, but now and then she would come running out, run her hand down the side of me next the fire, and, if it was dry, she would give me a jerk round a bit. I confess that her operations made me suspicious, for it dawned upon my mind that it was just in that neigborhood that a traveler, while asleep in a cabin by the roadside not long before, was murdered for his money.

The squealing and strange signs between mother and son, and the old lady's feeling of me up and down, made me conclude that it was all to find out if I had any of the precious metal about me. When I ate supper I went to bed, but did not sleep any, the least noise during the night making me feel that my last hour had come.

Next morning four of us sat down to breakfast; the old man whom I did not see the evening before having introduced himself, telling me that his wife and son were mutes, and then having asked the blessing, he asked what my business might be. I told him, and he expressed his regret that he did not know it sooner, as we might have had a preaching service at his house that morning. The surroundings were rough and the looks of the whole family were in keeping, but for all that they were a kindly, Christian people, who did their utmost to make me comfortable, and would take nothing for their services either.

The diamond in the rough is diamond all the same.

On another occasion, and several hundred miles from there, I came to a cabin on the prairie about midnight, where an old Scotchman and his wife lived and cultivated a small farm.

There was a furious rainstorm raging, and the nearest house was at least five miles away; the road was all mud, and my poor beast, like myself, no doubt felt that we had traveled far enough to deserve a few hours' rest under a roof.

I knocked at the door, and to the question "Wha 's there?" from a man in a bed inside, I replied that it was a passing traveler who desired to get inside for the night. "Weel, just keep passing on," said he. I protested and begged to be admitted at any cost, but to no purpose. Knowing by his broad Scotch that he was from the land of the heather, I told him that I was from there too, but the reply came quickly back: "Na, na; nae good Scotchman would be oot at this time o' nicht."

I remonstrated against his conclusion, and thinking that I could surely move him through the old kirk, I told him that I was a Presbyterian minister, and a Scotch one at that; but the crushing response was: "Then gae wa aboot yer business, and may the muckle De'il catch you, for the last preacher wha was here stole my Bible." That was a clincher, and I made up my mind to keep plodding on my way. I had not gone far when the thought struck me that he might be a Freemason, and I went back and gave the Masonic knocks and the cry of a brother in distress. That went home to the right place and brought him with a bound from his bed to the door, where he gave me the Masonic grip and bade me welcome in the name of King Solomon and all the ancient saints of the fraternity.

Then turning to his wife he said: "Get up, Jennet; get up, woman, and put on the kettle. This is a gentleman, an' no' like the scrub that took oor Bible."

The best that was in the house that night was mine, and the best in the stable was my horse's, all because the old man and I were bound together, not by blood or religion, but by the mystic tie. It is good to have more than one arrow in your quiver if you are traveling in a wild frontier country.

I have known many instances in which the grip of a Freemason pulled through trouble when nothing else would.

The Freemason's goat may butt hard at the lodge door before it lets you enter, but after you are inside, it changes into a lion for your defence.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CHANGED SCENE.

WHILE riding once in the neighborhood of the Indian nation I stopped for shelter overnight at a house to which I was recommended. The night was dark and my nag and self were nearly played out, for I was sleepy and hungry, and it was lame and tired.

A thin, tallow-faced lass of perhaps twenty years sat by the fireside. She was dressed in colors so loud that I could not help laughing in her face, and asking what was the matter. She was a bride that night and was waiting for the arrival of the bridegroom. Oh, she was so happy! so proud of her "noble, dearly beloved Romeo" who would come shortly. She quoted poetry in his praise by the yard, and named him after all the distinguished heroes of fiction. She spoke of him as having descended from a noble family in England who came over the briny ocean and settled in Virginia long before the days of Wallace and Bruce. Indeed, she did not know but that she might some day herself be a countess, or a queen of Sheba. Poor thing! her little head was away up among the stars while her big, flat feet were on the earth! At last the dogs began to bark. "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," she said, and rushing out to the gate, plunged into his arms with such demonstrations of joy that my horse, forgetting his lameness and his owner, galloped off at a rate to do credit to an Arab steed. The newcomer entered the cabin, arrayed in all the glories of field and forest, with his Sall hanging on his arm. He saluted the old folks in great style. He was a long, lean, lank, lounging sort of a mortal, and had with him a preacher, a fiddler, a bottle of whiskey, and a bag of candy. I left and went after my runaway quadruped which I found about two miles off at another farmhouse where we both put up for the night.

A few years later I was driving through the same country, and going towards the same old house I observed a large number of people running to it from the village near by. When I arrived I witnessed a sad sight. The old man and his daughter, the romantic bride of other days, were weeping and wailing over two dead bodies on the porch. They were shot just about ten or fifteen minutes before, and the blood was streaming from their wounds. The old man wept for a son, the daughter for a husband and brother.

It seemed that they all lived together and not always on the best of terms. The "noble" bridegroom of former days, it appeared, found fault with his spouse because of her fictitious life generally. He told her that she was a very poor wife for a struggling man in the Southwest. "Dad" on the occasion stepped in and spoke a word for "Sall." Hot words passed and repassed between father-in-law and son-in-law. To teach the father-in-law and his own wife a lesson in practical farming and obedience, the young husband drew his revolver and with a threat of instant death made both "Dad" and "Sall" go out into the timothy patch and cut hay with their teeth. He kept them thus employed for an hour or so, in the hot sun, when Dick, a brother-in-law, arrived home and seeing what was being done in the timothy patch was roused to kill.

There was an old buffalo gun in the house that had done good service in former years in Dick's hands. This he grasped, and putting a bullet into it large enough to kill a horse, sent it crushing through his brother-in-law's skull. The brother of this murdered boss, hearing what was done, armed himself for battle, and swore a solemn oath that he would kill Dick or die in the attempt. He lived in the village only a little ways off, and before Dick knew what he was about he had holes in him from head to foot. It was now the old man's turn to burn powder, and he got a bullet into the left leg of his son's murderer as he rode off. Two men dead and one wounded! All over nothing, so to speak.

Few in the East realize, when casting their gifts into the several treasuries for church building and Home Mission work generally in the West, how great is the good they do. Without the generosity of the East the wild West would be a good deal wilder than it is to-day. Church buildings and preachers of the gospel would be few indeed in those restless, godless communities if assistance did not come from without. Churches cost money on the frontier, but the money invested in them yields a hundred-fold in the uplifting of the people. In the region I went first to preach in, in Texas, when the Circuit Court met, the judge had to be surrounded by about twenty-five Texas rangers with loaded guns, while the horse thieves and murderers of the place were being tried. I remember well how glad that judge was on first meeting with me. He said, "The very presence of a gospel minister out here means even safety for the judge on the bench." So it turned out to be, in his case at least, for not long after the rangers were dispensed with in his court.

The gospel minister is everywhere welcomed in the rudest of those frontier communities, and his earnest labors are warmly appreciated by all. The first visible change is usually seen among the women. The old sunbonnet and the plain calico dress with which they first attend church are laid aside, and something more like what is seen in the old communities takes their place. The children respond at once and cluster with happy hearts around the preacher as once they did around his Master. The salvation of the wild West lies in the gospel of Jesus Christ and in good women from the civilized East.

I mean no offence to the native frontier woman by this. She is the creature of circumstances, over which she has no control. Her education and whole upbringing are such as to disqualify her for being the wife of a man who has been bred and raised in a more liberal and wider atmosphere. Misfortune generally it is to both parties when an Eastern man marries a woman bred and raised in the wild West. I speak from experience. The good book told me that a bishop should be the husband of one wife, and being a lonely bachelor bishop in Texas I married far out on the front a native girl. Somehow ever since Father Adam lost a rib in the making of woman, his sons have an aching void at the left side until that lost rib is replaced. I had at least, and putting that with what the Bible said, when I came across one whom I thought was mine and had her placed where I thought she belonged, I found to my sorrow, at the end of fifteen years, that she was not mine at all. If marriages are made in heaven, as it is said they are, they are strangely unmade on earth. Thirty thousand divorces a year in the United States are appalling! One hundred recently in Chicago in one day!

In some parts of the Southwest the competition between certain cities for the shameful business is almost incredible. Circulars are sent out all over the land expatiating on the advantages they offer. Going down on the trains you are handed a card with this on it from some iniquitous lawyer: "You are guaranteed absolute seclusion in O—— City and freedom from inquisitive reporters there, and decrees are never published." You are told also that you might better yourself by discarding the present yoke and looking around.

The change for the worse this degrading business is bringing about is alarming.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE UNLUCKY RANCH.

CERTAIN spots of this earth, like certain individuals, seem somehow or other to be always unlucky, and everything done in connection with them turns out unfortunately.

Journeying through a part of the Indian Nation with a companion, one upon whose head were thickly fallen the snows of years, we came to a very high bluff overlooking a winding stream and as beautiful a valley as eyes ever looked upon.

"Let us stop here," said my friend, "and look at this scene. You see yon large stone house and those stone fences reaching away in the distance. That's the unlucky ranch, as they call it, and indeed it seems to have the curse of Heaven resting upon it. It has had a checkered history. Long ago when the United States government was establishing military posts through this country, Captain

Lee, afterwards general of the Confederate Army, was marching with his troops along here, selecting suitable positions, when a great storm overtook them and they sought shelter under this bluff. The storm raged for many days and the soldiers, finding the caves below and the dens of the wild beasts so comfortable to live in, also fish and game so plentiful, that Lee concluded to remain and erect a post in yon field across the river, which he did. From the day that that post was started to this moment, trouble of some sort or other has been the lot of the place. Soldiers would quarrel and shoot each other down there; they would get drowned with their horses while crossing the river, and the Indians would put arrows through them when they least expected it. By and by Lee was removed and Captain Davis, afterwards President of the Confederacy, was in command here. Being engaged as a medical missionary to the Indians out here in my young days, I knew both Lee and Davis very well. Lee was a noble, Christian young man and his troops thought all the world of him. I, myself, was much attached to him.

It was not so with Davis. He was a haughty, selfish, cold-blooded disciplinarian, and cared as little for the comfort of his men as he did for the lives of the Indians, and as little for the lives of both as he did for that of the prowling panthers. I was located about forty miles from here, when a terrible and fatal disease broke out among his troops, and he despatched an orderly to me, asking if I would come of my own accord and doctor his men, or if he would press me into the service. I replied that there was no occasion for pressing me, that I would gladly come if I could be of any service in saving human life. As soon as I could make arrangements for my work at home, I went to his fort to find the soldiers in a woeful state.

My medicine had the desired effect in saving some of the poor fellows, and when it was almost used up Davis wrote and sent me an order requesting some of my medicine for his sick horse. I refused to comply, explaining to him that I was nearly out of it and that before a new supply could be procured from the East that his men would be all dead. His orderly came straight back with a peremptory demand that I hand him over my medicine at once. I again declined and he sent two soldiers who arrested and placed me in the guardhouse. I immediately sent off a despatch to the Secretary of War at Washington, protesting against my treatment, and a message came quickly back apologizing to me, another to Davis ordering my release and severely rebuking him. I said to myself at that time, I will watch the future history of this man, and I am now, after sixty years, not disappointed.

During the War of the Rebellion a company of Confederate soldiers demolished the old post in search of nails and such other things as they needed. Some twenty-five years back a young cow man, with his newly married wife, bought a half section of land down there, taking where the post stood, and utilized the stones of the old government buildings for the erection of the big house yonder and the fences. His bride's father, being a well-to-do stockman in the neighborhood, gave her as her dowry five hundred head of fine young cows. Her brother, who was in company with the old gentleman, on finding out what was done, went and drove the young cattle back and replaced them with the same number of old scrubs. The young cow man, on coming home and finding what his brother-in-law had done, sent him his old cows and told him to go to Jericho with them or somewhere else not so far away. This led to family feuds and bad blood in the neighborhood generally. One morning about sunrise the young cow man went out forgetting to go armed, and he had pointed in his face from behind a stone fence a half-dozen cocked Winchesters, with the demand to surrender. He did so, was taken to prison about thirty miles away and that night was shot to pieces.

Two years passed and the young widow married a preacher, and he not being accustomed to the use of the branding irons, his wife sold her cattle and invested her money in sheep, believing that her good man could manage easily two flocks — a woolly one and one that was n't woolly. The latter flock was sometimes troublesome enough, for the frolicking wethers would stray away and mingle with the ewes of neighboring herders, and that would raise the dust on the prairie. The woolly flock, however, was the one that filled his soul with sorrow six days in the week. The herders were unreliable, and though strictly commanded not to, would get drunk on duty, and then they could n't tell a sheep from a goat, nor their own from a neighbor's flock, and the result invariably was a scattering of thousands and a total loss of hundreds. The scab, too, struck the woolly flock and this cost thousands of dollars and a world of annoyance. Then the politicians reduced the tariff on wool, and the railroad companies raised the freight on wethers to Chicago, and the consequence was dead loss instead of much gain ; and then, to crown all, a dreadful winter following a long drouth, which melted that woolly flock away like snow in spring.

In the mean time the preacher went about aiding the starving Indians who were neglected by their government, and apparently by the rain-making powers, and thus differed from his wife's brother already referred to, who commanded him to cease his efforts and let them go to some other hunting grounds. The preacher would not recognize his authority over him in such a matter, and then began to arise a spirit of opposition and wrongful treatment almost incredible. That preacher to-day is a homeless wanderer, for though he invested five thousand dollars of his own money in improvements on the ranch it has been taken from him and all that it contained.

A young man from Scotland, who was looking over the country for a cow ranch, cast his eyes on this one and was captivated by the beauty of the scene, for it was in the springtime of the year, and he rented it, and while waiting for the proper season to buy cattle, he planted forty acres in watermelons. He was a visionary youth and believed that he could show the natives how to make money raising watermelons. When he planted the seed he would sit for hours on yon cross fence looking at his melon patch and impatient for the sprouting of the vines through the soil. At last they came and then the watery fruit followed. Tom Greenlees was now full of expectation by day, and of bright dreams by night. He saw himself a wealthy ranchman away in the future, with lots of servants round about him. When the watermelons grew and grew, till they were large enough to winter a sheep inside, Tom loaded his wagon and started for the railroad, believing that he could sell his melons at about twenty-five cents apiece. He left home about sun up, and at noon he rested in the shade of a large tree and made his dinner of watermelons. That was a sad mistake for Tom. As he drove his team along the road all that afternoon, the cattle would lift their heads in amazement, listen a little, and then in terror make for the woods, believing that a new sort of a cyclone was coming. The loafer-wolf would look down from the brow of a hill at him and begin howling in unison with the music that came from the passing melon wagon.

It was a sorrowful drive for Tom. But he was glad when he saw a negro cabin by the roadside, and coming up to it, he begged in mercy's name to be taken in and cured. The old "aunty," who was mistress of the cabin, thought him at first crazy and barred the door; but seeing him writhing in pain on his melon bed, with the tears rolling down his cheeks, she pitied him and ventured out. She lifted him down tenderly from his wagon and stretched him on the hearth before her fireplace and argued with the colic *a priori* and *exposteriori*, but to little purpose. In the mean time a half dozen of her pickaninnies got into the wagon and made havoc of Tom's watermelons. Sadly and painfully the railroad was reached, to find that the watermelons were selling at about two cents each, and even at that you could only trade them for something else. Tom traded his load for a fifty-cent hat and when he settled with the doctor he was poorer by five dollars than he was when he left home. All this soured the honest Scotchman, and though a good Christian at home in his native land, he took to swearing awfully at things in general, and at watermelons in particular. It was just terrifying to be within a mile of him at any hour of the day. Shortly after his return from the railroad, an old cow belonging to a neighbor got into his melon patch, and though she could do but little financial damage, the melons being now worthless, Tom made the air blue and the hills tremble with his oaths, and in a fit of anger put a pitchfork into her side. This brought the owner of the cow to remonstrate, and seeing him approach his gate the foolish Scot challenged him to a fistic encounter.

"We don't fight that way in this country," said the neighbor; "but how does that suit you?" Tom fell, but the shot was not fatal, and when the bullet was extracted and he was able to go about again, he bade farewell to ranching in the wild West and made long strides in the direction of "bonnie Dundee."

Others also rented or bought the place, but the same bad luck followed all alike, and the man who now owns it has not procured it justly, and when he is through with it he is likely to say that his ranch was a bag with holes in the bottom.

Having thus rested our horses and viewed the unlucky ranch, we passed on, discussing as we did so the strange fatality that seems to cling to certain places and persons.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE STRUGGLE.

SOME years ago a very bitter feeling existed between the cattle men and farmers in Northwestern Texas, because of the fencing in of great tracts of land by the former to the great disadvantage of the latter.

The cow man wanted the whole earth for himself and fenced in whole counties of it that did not belong to him. The farmer, therefore, found himself often shut up in a corner, out of which he could not get unless he traveled ten or twenty miles, perhaps, to visit a neighbor who might only be half a mile off. This made bad blood between the parties, and the wire-cutting war began, which forced the governor to call a special meeting of the Legislature to put a stop to it.

On the heels of this a terrible two years' drouth followed. My church at the time was composed almost entirely of cattle men, but I took the part of the farmers, who were in great distress, even on the verge of starvation. I appealed for aid through some New York papers, and small sums came, with which I fed all who applied to my utmost ability.

Forty counties were in distress and the suffering was alarming. I preached to my church the duty of assisting the suffering farmers, but they would not. I then told the farmers not to die of hunger while there was a hoof on the prairie or in the woods, and they did n't, either. This caused a committee of relief to be organized, and I was asked to come up North and solicit aid. I came, but did the soliciting publicly before representative bodies of every sort, from St. Louis to New York, and from Boston to Washington City. This method was not taken into calculation by the cattle men who sent me, and as I exposed the condition of the country in a way they did not like, they called to me to return home; and as I did not till I got through with my mission, they opposed me through the press to their utmost. The reason for this opposition was the fact that at that time many of the leading cattle men of Texas were busy selling off their ranches here in the North and in Europe to syndicates, who were buying up land and cattle without proper investigation. The late Jay Gould also opposed me through his secret agents, for he owned the Texas Pacific Railroad and I was hindering immigration. The good people, however, of the North contributed, but not what they would were I allowed to tell the truth unopposed. I could write a very interesting book on this theme alone, but will only state briefly that after three months' pleading in the North I returned to Texas, where the capitalistic press was cursing me and my enemies, burning me in effigy, and hanging me to lamp-posts. I did not care, however, what they did to me in this way, and I went boldly on my mission through the State, conscious of the integrity of my purpose and strong in the feeling of independence because of the silver hole which I owned in Nevada.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE VICTORY.

TO confirm what I published, and to plead even more strongly than I did, the judges of forty counties met in Albany, where I lived, and appointed me as their special agent to go first to the State Legislature, and if that body did not respond, I was to proceed to Congress and demand instant relief. The distress now was becoming terrible.

On my way to Austin, the capital of the State, I called on the editor of The Dallas News, the main paper in the employ of the capitalists for my abuse. He had just published three editorials denouncing me as a liar and fraud of the first water. I gave the gentleman to understand that if he did n't change his tone I would shortly head a procession of five thousand starving farmers, who would soon demolish both him and his paper without ceremony. I demanded an immediate reply, and he begged for a few hours till he could call a meeting of the board of managers. I consented, and next morning there was a complete somersault and a loud calling for subscriptions, for the needy farmers, and an editorial endorsing my efforts. Calling also at Waco, where the State cattle men's convention was in session, I presented myself before the cattle barons and was given an opportunity to speak, which I did, stirring up the wrath of some to such an extent that I was cautioned lest there might be some powder burned. In going before the Legislature I was accorded an opportunity to speak before a joint meeting of both branches, and spoke for two hours, showing the need of relief and the treatment I had received at the hands of my opponents, and especially of Governor Ireland, who was then the popular candidate for the United States Senate.

During my speech the governor, who was listening, sent a page boy with a letter making a sort of apology and excusing himself because he did not know the matter was so serious. When I got through, the verdict of all was that I had killed the governor for the

Senate; and sure enough, when the election came off in a few days he was retired to private life and Reagan was sent in his place to Washington. Next morning, after my plea for the farmers, a bill was set a-going giving one hundred thousand dollars, and with this help the poor tillers of the soil managed to get along until the rains came and every one had plenty. This completed my work and my vindication before the whole country.

My efforts were solely humanitarian, and so far as I was concerned I did my work with no thought of what might be the future consequences to myself. My reward, however, came in due time.

The cattle men of my church requested my resignation, and they got it, and a farewell sermon too, which perhaps they have not forgotten yet.

Mass meetings were held and resolutions passed urging me to stay in Texas, but I left. I left feeling that I had done nothing but my duty to a deserving people who needed some Moses to save them from the Aarons who worshiped the Golden Calf. The ill-will, however, gendered during that struggle has followed me ever since, and cruel, unjust, and treacherous conduct on the part of my wife's near relatives, who are among the leading cattle men of the State, has now robbed me of property, wife, and children.

Ah, me! this is not a world where a man, if he is a preacher, can afford, if he wants a roof over his head, to take the part of the oppressed poor against the power of capital.

"He who ascends the mountain-tops shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in cloud and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind
Must look on the hate of those below."

The Texas of to-day is a civilized place. I built three churches there, and preached a great many good sermons; I did, indeed. Any man's life and property are as safe there now as anywhere else, but you are not considered as belonging to the aristocracy unless you have cattle drinking water from all the water holes of the prairies, and eating grass on a thousand hills. The cow man will not drink at a saloon bar with a sheep man or a farmer. No, indeed, he is too good for that, and if he gets religion he won't drink at the bar at all. The sheepman of Texas is an honest man, if there are no other sheep within reach of him. He is a sort of Arab wandering about with his flock from water hole to water hole. He is a lonely man without any family worship, and all days of the week are alike to him. At night he sleeps in a little round tent close by his sheep with his weather eye open on the wolves. He usually gets three crops a year; one of lambs in the spring, one of wool in the summer, and one of bones in the winter. He is not happy, however, for though a democrat in politics, he is a great protectionist. He chews tobacco and swears at all free traders as the children of the wicked one. Yet, for all this, he is an honest man.

The Texas farmer is a kind man and given to hospitality. He sleeps in the house at night and under a shady tree in the day. He is religious as a rule and goes to church on Sunday like any other Christian. He is not lazy, only born tired; and what are Texas trees good for if you don't enjoy their shade, so cool and delightful? There you can lie down and be at peace with Texas and all the world beside.

I like the dashing cow man of Texas and the honest sheep man, but I love the farmer down there. Cotton raising is his main crop, and it takes thirteen months in the year to do it too, but he is courageous and industrious, and he produces what keeps many of the cotton mills of the world a-running.

I don't believe that the Texas farmer is lazy, though I got so lazy myself when there, and slept so much in the shade, that I had no time to examine him. There is no difference between a man that is born tired and a man who becomes tired, and neither should be blamed, for nature does it.

The Texas farmer is perfectly orthodox both as a Christian and as a politician, and you need never be at a loss, if you are hungry, for a meal of victuals, and never for a good bed to sleep in, even if he has himself to go to the hayloft.

I will never allow any one in my presence to say a disrespectful word of the Texas farmer, for I know him as a kind, good man who has a heart as big as his barn.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BUSY EAST.

THIS country here called New England is considered a Christian section, I believe, but I have seen some queer specimens here as well as in the West and Southwest. There, for instance, is Mr. Dry-goods, an elder in a church hereabouts. He is just like my old friend Jacobs down in Texas. Shortly after I came to this country up here he subscribed two hundred dollars towards my church debt at Fall River, and then went about and begged for it from certain Sunday-schools. He got it all but eighty dollars and this he refused to pay because a certain friend of his was put out of office in the church at Fall River for using in his own business the Lord's money. Well, remembering that I had that silver hole out in Nevada, I gave him his character in writing just as it is, and he put a knife in the bag that took my salary from New York, and cut a hole so big in it that it has never brought me a dollar since. It will not do for any one section of this country to imagine that it is very much superior to the rest. Man is man the world over.

Shortly after coming here a great strike of the mill operatives took place in the city I lived in. When this strike was on, and the suffering among the operatives was becoming serious, a deputation from the Weavers' Executive Committee came to my house about twelve o'clock one night, and asked me to meet with them early next morning, to see if I could assist in bringing the opposing factions to some sort of agreement. I complied, and urged for the immediate resumption of work. I then, by request, went with them to the park and addressed the great gathering there in favor of ending the strike.

This was going against the current of feeling, and when a show of hands was called for, not many responded. Feeling sorry for the people in what I considered their blindness to the existing conditions, I brought on the "rousements," as we preachers used to do at camp meetings out West, when sinners were stiff-necked, and spoke so loud and long that I was laid up after for several days with sore lungs. I had an overwhelming feeling within me that I was speaking on the side of God and humanity, and therefore felt determined that the great assemblage should think as I did, and I succeeded. But success in the great efforts of one's life is sometimes followed by unpleasant consequences.

The same summer's sun that clothes the fields with beauty brings the mosquito from the swamp. Our joys and sorrows are near akin, and the sweetest song of triumph has its undertones of sadness. The cause of labor belongs to the Master Workman of the Universe, and not to scheming politicians. He who would honestly speak out for labor's highest interest may expect opposition even from those for whom he proclaims, for so it was with the perfect One some two thousand years ago.

I am pleased to know that I have the respect and good will of a large number of the people there still, though some speak against me, because of misrepresentations sent abroad among them by interested parties. Three years ago they were kind enough to send me to the Legislature of this State, and while there I cautioned against the further reduction of the hours of labor for the time being, seeing that the year before there was a reduction of two hours a week made below any other State in the Union. This led many to suppose that I had deserted their cause, but they are beginning now to see that the stand I took in the Legislature was really the only one that could be taken at the time for their own best interests.

I believe in the eight-hour workday for women and children when a national law compels every State to grant it.

The discussion was over a bill introduced in the House of Representatives to make the weekly work time fifty-four hours. I opposed this bill on the ground that it would greatly cripple the manufacturers of Massachusetts, while other New England States run their mills sixty hours, and the South went even as high as seventy. I could see in the forced reduction meanwhile but disaster for the operatives themselves, as it always happens that they, more than any one else, have to bear the consequences of profitless manufacturing.

The main argument of the advocates of the bill was the necessity of constant agitation in order to carry the measure, but I am not worth a cent on parade, and never was, hence often a failure. Give me a good, honest object to fight for, and I will go into it with all my heart, but I will never burn powder for the sake of making smoke and noise.

While in the Legislature I did not make many speeches, but did on a certain day take part in a discussion over a bill introduced to do away with the State Fast Day. I advocated the measure, seeing that the day was no longer observed as in the days of old, when a little chap, who was a descendant of the Puritans, sprang to his feet and shouted: " Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the gentleman from Fall River if he went to church with his parents when a boy in Massachusetts."

I replied: " Mr. Speaker, this man is insinuating that I am a foreigner.

"I acknowledge the corn, but I think on that very account I am better qualified to make laws for this State than he is. I came into this State clothed and in my right mind;

he came in naked and had no mind at all. I came here after deliberation and due consideration, of my own free will; he was brought in and had no say-so in the matter. I came here paying my passage money as I came along, and he got in free. Am not I the better man?"

That legislator never asked me another question while I was there. I suppose, however, that when he and I are up yonder in the Great Assembly Hall, where people are gathered from all the tribes of earth, that if I should say anything that did not suit his prejudices, he will be jumping to his feet and shouting to the presiding officer: "Mr. President, I would like to know if the gentleman went to church with his parents when a boy in Massachusetts!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE EASTERN WOMAN.

I WANT to say just a word or two on the New England woman, in the hope that she will hear it. If I were a young man and wanted to select a wife, I do not know that I could go anywhere in this broad land to find a better than can be found right here in great abundance. I will go further than this, and say that for a real, womanly wife you cannot find her superior anywhere on this round earth. I say this in all seriousness and after much knowledge of the ordinary woman as she is found to-day in all her tribes, nations, and societies. This clearly understood, I would say to the New England woman, "Sister, you have a great mission before you in regard to the West, and if you fail in your duty there must come, sooner or later, another opening of the heavens, and another angelic manifestation of a positive character which will introduce a messenger who will speak both to you and the Western man in the name and by the authority of God Almighty. You are now doing something, I fully know, in the way of sending educational and gospel institutions to the far West to enlighten and save your brothers there, and not a word from me will ever discourage you from doing a thousand times more hereafter in the same way than you have been doing in the past. I can heartily bear testimony to the good you are doing from what I have seen in the West of your labors of love. WHAT YOU MUST, HOWEVER, DO IS TO GIVE YOURSELF!"

That, my friend, would be my last and all-important message to the Eastern woman, if I were never again to put foot on her native soil. She is not at present giving herself as God intended she should, and if she will continue in her course the social equilibrium of this country will go on from bad to worse, until there will be such a shaking from sea to sea as will either destroy or create anew. To better show you what I mean I will point to ancient Roman and Jewish histories. For many hundred years the republic of Rome was, socially, almost in every sense a model even to our present christendom. The marriage relation between the sexes was then honored, and truth, frugality, and virtue were supreme. Gradually, however, because of military and national aggrandizement, the young men spread themselves out over the world, leaving their sisters at home, and these sisters in their turn took to ways and manners of life that were not conducive to the highest domestic morality, brought about such a state of society that marriage was utterly ignored, and soon the republic went under, and on its ruins rose the empire which finally destroyed the nation from centre to circumference. In vain did Augustus, the first Roman emperor, pass laws compelling marriage between the sexes. The disease was too deeply rooted in all classes of society for that, as you can easily understand by reading Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

One great reason for the introduction of Christianity was the elevation of marriage and proper establishment of the family. The Jew as well as the Roman was slighting the divinely ordained institution, now as never before, and needed to have "the heart of the fathers turned to the children," and because Jew and Roman alike turned a deaf ear to him who began his works of divine power at a wedding in Cana, thus putting honor on marriage above all other institutions, the one was scattered abroad without a home or a country, and the other was blotted from off the face of the earth.

Is there not a word of warning in all this to this great Western republic? How do we find matrimonial matters to-day? Decidedly out of gear. The young men are no longer wanted in factories, stores, or offices, and are crowding out West in search of employment and the gold of the mountains, leaving their sisters behind just as the young Romans did, and we find them by the thousand out yonder, wifeless and homeless. Have I not seen them in Texas and Nevada? Do I not know that they would gladly marry Eastern girls if they would only come out to them? Have I not seen the degradation of Indian women by the hardened miners of the Pacific Coast? Is there not rising up here in the East and yonder in the West a condition of things that is ruinous to the nation? You may smile at this which I have just clipped from a Boston paper, but it shows that the unmarried women of Canada propose to give more substantial evidence of good will to their brothers on the Pacific Coast than even gospel ordinances.

AN UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE FAIR SEX IN CANADA.

VANCOUVER, B. C., April 16. — The mayor of Vancouver has received a peculiar letter from Toronto, written in the interests of the young women in Toronto and other Eastern Canadian cities. In this unique epistle the writer states that, according to statistics, there is a shortage in the female population in the northwest territories and British Columbia amounting to about forty thousand, and there is in Eastern Canada a corresponding overplus of unmarried women. In order to equalize matters it is proposed to send young women of good health and moral character West to be distributed where the demand is greatest, and for this purpose it is sought to establish a home at Vancouver for the reception and distribution of the young women for British Columbia.

The very thing proposed by the good women of Canada is what should be taken up and considered seriously by the New England women. For the same thing is, perhaps even more so, true of this section than of Canada. What is wanted in our new States and Territories are women that will be true wives to those rough, lonely fellows who are now living a life that is degrading to both themselves and others. The Chinese and other nations that live through the ages are those that have their men and women go hand in hand to the remotest parts of their territories and marry according to some well-established system.

If the Western man is to be kept from becoming a savage, he must have the Eastern woman to accompany him to his Western home. He needs her refining influences in the hour of his prosperity, and her soothing hand in the hour of adversity.

> "For contemplation he, and valor, formed;
> For softness she, and sweet, attractive grace."

This does not imply but that there are women now living in the wild West. There are some of course, but not enough to go round, and because of this shortage the native young woman, as a rule, is petulant, narrow in her sympathies, and much given to running home to her mother when she is in the least crossed.

This is why the new States and Territories have such easy-going divorce laws. The men that made those laws had in mind the possibility of their being needed by themselves to get rid of a truant wife at some time or other. I will just mention one instance to show you how badly a man gets mated sometimes where men are plentiful and women scarce. Jim Anderson had a cow ranch far out in the southern part of the Indian nation. He stumbled across a girl there whose father kept a small store on the banks of the Koon River, and he loved her at sight, proposed, and was accepted all in one day. The Koon River at times overflows its banks and forms here and there what might be called lagoons. When this happens, it is not always easy for you to get to the point you want to reach. Jim Anderson was dead in love with his girl, and used to go to see her every few days, lest some other fellow should run away with her. On one of those love-sick visits he came to the neighborhood of the Koon, but was debarred by a lake in front of him from reaching her father's house. It was night, and the moon hung high over the tall, red pine trees. Thus poor Romeo could do nothing but sit on a log looking at the playful frogs, and sing over the waters of the Koon to his Juliet till the daylight brought the mud boat to his relief; and here is what he sang: —

"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Koon,
How can ye sing so sweet and clear?
How can ye chant, ye little toads,
And I so far from Mary dear?
Thou 'lt break my heart, thou warbling frog
That paddles through the silvery sea;
Thou minds me o' the coming joys,
When Mary brings the cake to me.

"Oft hae I row'd on bonnie Koon
To see the oak and redwood twine,
And ilka crow sung to its mate,
Oh, where? oh, where is baby mine?
Wi' lightsome heart I pulled the oar,
And Mary's lamb did sweetly sing,
While she and I wi' joyfu' glee
Spoke softly o' the wedding ring.

"But now I sit by bonnie Koon,
And waiting for the swift canoe,
While Mary sighs, and all forlorn,
Sits waiting for her own cuckoo,
Thou 'lt strike me dead, ye cruel hours,
That slowly pass to yesterday;
Ye mind me o' the lazy sloth
That climbs the trees of Uruguay."

That's how he sung about the Koon River when in love. By and by he got married, and then he sung the same song with considerable variation. His Mary Ann was a vain and frivolous creature who would pout and be disagreeable if things did not go to suit her. If, for instance, when out after his cattle, he did not get back when she thought he ought to, she would scold and fret about it; and if he dared to say a cross word in reply, she would run home to her mother; and then he would have to go after her and be lectured by the old lady. She had a big, rawboned brother, too, who used to abuse him when he saw fit, simply because he was unable to split as many rails a day as he could. Not providing for her jewelry and other fineries, she accused him of not loving her; and to plague him, she would go out riding with more stylish young men than he was. As the years rolled by, this got to be too scandalously frequent, and then it got to be Jim's turn to scold for tardy returns on her part. He provided good books for her to read and a piano to play on, and did everything that an honest, industrious man could do to make her contented and happy, but to no purpose. Two little children were born in this home, but even this did not have sufficient influence to keep her from riding out with her lovers. And leaving the two little tots one day alone, they wandered out into the woods to gather flowers, and one of them fell over a bluff and was killed. The father, on coming home, was crazed with grief and indignation, and, naturally enough, upbraided his wife for her shameless conduct. But can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? The same sun that softens butter will harden clay, and afflictions sometimes will only make bad people worse. When the dead child was laid away in its grave, one dark night she stole the living one and made off with one of her admirers to Texas, leaving honest Jim Anderson wifeless and childless. He properly procured a divorce, and after a time went eastward to his own native land and procured a homely but honest girl, who made him a good, faithful wife.

Some time before he got his second wife, he happened to be in the neighborhood of his first wife's girlhood home. He went and sat down and sung on the same old log on which he used to sing in praise of the Koon; and this is how he did it: —

"Ye banks and stumps o' slimy Koon,
How can ye look to heaven above?
How can ye peep, ye hateful frogs,
And falsely mutter o' your love?
Thou 'ast broke my heart, thou great bullfrog,
That 's sprawling in the deep, green mire,
Thou minds me o' the crocodile
That 's down below in 'ternal fire.

"Oft hae I rode, you ugly Koon,
Along your muddy banks so drear,
To see your logs and horrid swamps
That 's cost me now so very dear.
Your lands and sheep are all a fraud,
And so are all your ravens black;
Thou art the thief that stole my peace,
But ah! some day thou 'lt be caught!

"Thou loathsome Koon! thou nasty Koon!
Your reeds and weeds, your frogs and crows,
I bid farewell forevermore,
And seek in other climes repose.
Thou, too, farewell, deceitful wife,
That 's stole my darling child away!
If 't will give you joy to know it 's so,
Then know that thou hast cursed my life."

Jim finally left the Indian nation, taking his second wife and cattle to Kansas, where he is now a happy and prosperous cow man and farmer.

Such men as this are out yonder by the hundreds of thousands, and they would gladly welcome to their bachelor halls home-loving, virtuous women from the old States, who would be unto them true and loving wives. The Eastern woman has a great mission before her in life. And where the field of that mission is should be as plain to her as if God had written it in letters of fire across the heavens — the wild West.

There she is needed, and there she should be, and there she will stand "clad in the beauty of a thousand stars," if she will but act her part in harmony with her nobler instincts.

At the very beginning it was said from heaven that it was not good for man to be alone; and if it was not good for him then, when the trials of life were few compared to those of the present day, what else but positive evil can be the lot of him who is roughing it alone in the wild West? It is, indeed, an evil which no man should be called upon to endure.

As a rule it is the noblest, the bravest, the most enterprising that go to the front. The drones of the hive stay in the rear. Are these daring sons of America, who risk their lives fighting the rude Goliaths of the frontier that the unbounded wealth of the great West may be developed, to do it alone, without the inspiration which comes from woman's companionship? Must they walk the wide plains, cultivate the rich valleys, climb the mountains, and dig into the bowels of the earth without the music of a woman's voice or the blessing of a woman's presence?

Let the women of the East awake to their duty to the wild West, and on some such lines as those on which the Canadian women are moving, let them provide true and loving wives for their roaming brothers that are far out towards the setting sun.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MARRIAGE.

ONE hundred years, or thereabout, ago there sailed across the Atlantic and settled in North Carolina where he farmed and owned slaves, a member of Clan Campbell, — that is one of the Scottish clans formerly inhabiting a large part of the Western Highlands, whose chief was the Duke of Argyle.

In the course of years this man and the Highland lassie he took with him as his wife had round about them a large family, one of whom, at least, a daughter, is still living, though considerably over the allotted span of life.

Inheriting the energy and enterprising spirit of her paternal clansmen, this lady married, and with her Carolinian husband went to Northwestern Texas, far out beyond the limits of civilization, and there engaged in cattle raising. Surrounded on every side by hostile Comanche Indians, they defended their cattle and raised a family, mostly boys, who knew from their childhood how to ride horseback and fight the redskins.

Into the same region, and about the same time, moved also another young couple, natives of Alabama, and engaged in the same line of business. When the children of these cattle ranchers grew up to manhood and womanhood they interlaced in wedlock, and now they far eclipse the fathers in cattle raising.

Some forty years after the departure of the Highland clansman from his native heath, a nephew of his married a sister of my mother. They also crossed the briny deep, and settled in the backwoods of Canada, near where the city of London now stands. There, with the vigor of his race, this younger clansman bravely faced the prowling Indians and savage beasts, while he stretched at his feet the big trees of the forest. He too raised a large family, now prosperous and enterprising in various spheres of life, but neither the Canadian clansman nor his uncle in North Carolina knew anything of the whereabouts of the other.

About four years ago, and just a year before his death, he being now about eighty-three years old, I visited my Canadian relation on his beautiful farm, and while sitting together before his large open fireplace, he happened to remark that an uncle of his went to North Carolina a long while ago and settled there. The thought entered my mind like a flash that in all probability the venerable Texas lady, who, by the way, was about his own age, and extremely like him in appearance, and the mother of my wife's two brothers-in-law, was his cousin. Her maiden name too was Campbell and she spoke Gaelic, the native language of her parents, in her girlhood days, all of which she herself told me.

Investigation was set on foot, and sure enough, "Aunt Ann," as we called her, was my uncle's full cousin. I was thus linked to the North Carolina branch of Clan Campbell through marriage, and to the Canadian branch through blood.

How came this about?

Along the frontier of Texas, when I went there, our government maintained a number of military posts for the protection of the overland mail to California, and also the settlers along the route, against the wild Comanches. It was, therefore, my privilege and pleasure to make the acquaintance of a large number of officers and their troops; and also to preach to them on occasion. When Commander Lincoln, son of a New England minister, was in charge at Fort Griffin, he used quite often to send his carriage a hundred miles east and take me out to preach to his men.

Among the officers at that post was a "brither Scot" from Edinburgh, who seemed to have taken to war as a duck does to water. When quite a youth he ran away from home and fought in the Crimean War, then in the War of the Rebellion in India, then again in China.

Crossing the Atlantic he fought in the Confederate Army, and then again in Mexico, against Emperor Maximilian. Recrossing the Atlantic, he fought in France against Prussia, and when he could find no fighting to do anywhere else he went out to fight Indians in Texas.

An intimacy sprung up between us, and when poor "Jack" was sick, and nigh unto death, the Bishop of Texas (for Jack was an Episcopalian) asked me to go out and see him. I went, and arrived just one hour after Jack was laid away in his soldier grave with military honors.

That evening a friend requested me to visit with him a certain cow ranch, the owner of which was originally from Alabama. Then began the real joys and sorrows of my life. I did n't do like Isaac, send a servant for her afterwards, but I went myself, taking another preacher with me, three days' journey towards the setting sun. I don't believe in omens, good or bad, and I don't think, after consulting with myself, that I am superstitious, and yet I tell the following for the honest opinion of those that believe in signs. The first day out, one of our horses got the colic and it would lie down in the traces and try to roll over. We traded the brute off for another that evening. The second day out, our new horse had the scour so bad that we took ten dollars for it, and bought another from an honest farmer with whom we put up that night. The third day's new horse had a mental ailment, and when it trotted ten miles from home it became exceedingly homesick and uncertain as to the way it should go. We preachers tried by gentle words to persuade it to continue the onward journey, but it would n't. We pulled it by the ears, but it stuck its forefeet forward and acted more like a mule than a decent horse. We tried the whip on his hind-quarters, but to no purpose. My companion was much versed in the science of horseology, and he gave me a pointer on how to deal with a balky horse. First he unhitched it, then rode it round and round blindfolded till it was so dizzy that it could hardly stand up, and then he hitched it again, still blindfolded, and told it to go and it did. We had no more trouble with that beast, for it imagined that it was going back home when it was n't.

When we arrived at one of the old man's outer gates, I jumped from the buggy to open it and my bran new broadcloth coat caught in the barbed wire fence and it was torn to such an extent that I, too, then had a mental ailment and got uncertain as to the way I should go. As there was not a tailor within two hundred miles of us, my friend urged me on, threatening to blindfold me if I did n't. On the following day the knot was tied and we started for Galveston on our marriage tour, and after fifteen hours of jostling and thumping in a barbarous old stage-coach over the rockiest, roughest road mortal man ever rode on, we reached a railroad town about two o'clock in the morning to find all the hotels full, and so had to walk the streets till our train arrived about six hours after. The conjugal voyage thus started lasted just fifteen years and then our bark was beached. Truly, "life is a mingled yarn." And when the mingling that has tears in it comes from the treachery of professed friends, the hatred of foes, or from your own impulsiveness it is bad enough, but when it arises from the dearest relation that can exist out of heaven, it is sorrowful in the extreme. Oh, it is a thousand times better to be disappointed in courtship than deceived in marriage, for the stem that the rose may bud on to-day will bud again to-morrow, but the tree that is dead in the morrow of wedlock is dead forever!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE KYLES OF BUTE.

SINCE coming here to the East I have succeeded in making a great many friends and enemies, just as I used to do in the wild West when I tried to do my duty.

This world is not a place where a man can speak the truth and not be hated. The shadows are lengthening, however, and I must be going, I know not where, but there is a dear spot over the sea in the Kyles of Bute which I hope to see again before I end this pilgrimage.

Don't you ever go to Scotland, brother, without visiting the Kyles of Bute. They are more beautiful than the Bosphorus.

There is the home of my childhood, and though I say it myself, it is one of the most charming spots on earth.

The surroundings are lovely, and when troubles crowd upon my path I go on fancy's wing and lie down in the soft woodland grass beside the brook yonder that goes laughing to the sea below. There the sun lingers in passing over, and when he sets behind the western isles that rise like sleeping kings out of the Atlantic, he sends back his golden rays to kiss the sweet-scented blossoms and glorify wood and heather. There the birds come from the South to build their nests and to linger long among the yellow leaves of autumn. I have seen them weep when they had to go back to Spain and France. The wild bee revels in winter on the honey he gathers there in summer. The night cannot stay there long in June and July, only a few hours. Go with me at two o'clock in the morning for about a mile up through the steep woods that rise from the shore where my boyhood's home is, and then climb another mile or so back of this up a steep heathery mountain so beautifully terraced as if the Creator had made it with a golden spade, to the level ridge above the clouds. Now cast yourself on your back in the heather and watch the larks rise from their dewy beds on all sides of you, follow their upward flight singing as they go up and up into the ethereal blue. When they are so far up that you cannot see them you hear something that will make you imagine that you are on the plains of Bethlehem the night Christ was born.

But the King of Day is sending ahead of him from the east his spears of light to tell of his approach. Rise up now and look down to the sea, so calm and glasslike, and there, in the middle of a bay embosomed by the woods on the shore is a cottage, not large nor ornamental. How like a pine of the Sierras rises the smoke from the chimney! But listen! Hear the swelling concert that comes up from the woods blow. The mavises, the starlings, the blackbirds, the linnets, the cuckoos, and the robins, to say nothing of lesser songsters, all are trying to outdo each other in making the countryside resound with their marvelous melody.

Descend now and enter the cottage by the sea. It is Milton Cottage, named after him who sung of Paradise. It is five o'clock in the morning, and the husband and father is breakfasting on porridge and milk, followed perhaps by a little tea. As he eats he casts a glance now and then on the old clock hanging on the wall, for he would not be a moment late, for the world, in being at his daily toil down at the laird's. A little prayer is said for guidance to him and his for the day, and then he is off down the highway as happy as if he owned all the gold of California. On his return in the evening, and supper over, he digs or plants in the garden, or prunes the rose bushes around the cottage for an hour or two, or maybe listens to the youngsters repeating the shorter catechism. He sleeps the sleep of the just now among the "mouls" in the little churchyard down by the roadside, and his soul is with the angels. Twelve children went out from his old home, and the graves of some of them are scattered far and wide o'er mount and land and sea, but the eye of any of them never saw, nor the ear never heard coming from him that which memory rejects.

Never saw the Kyles of Bute? Why, it was there that Robert Burns met his Highland Mary, that Byron met the Maid of Athens, and Longfellow his Evangeline.

It was there, near Milton Cottage, that Jacob kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept, and Tom Moore sighed over the last rose of summer. Oh! this world is beautiful and the heavens are pretty, but the Kyles of Bute are bonnie. Yon cottage by the sea was only a peasant's cottage, but there was and is that about it which shall never die from this heart wherever I roam.

> "You may break, you may ruin the vase if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will cling to it still."

Thus spake Parson Ralph Riley, and as the sun was now setting, he arose to leave, and as he did so, I could see that he was vexed at the wrongs of this wicked world, and even more so at the shams and hypocrisies of some professing Christians. His narrative gives a pretty good idea of the manner of life in the wild West and Southwest twenty-five years ago. There is no frontier any longer now to this country, and those who would experience the excitements of a new country must go to Africa.